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ABSTRACT

These hearings transcripts present testimony on the impact of the Head Start program for preparing disadvantaged children for school, to inform the reauthorization of Head Start. Opening statements by U.S. Representatives Michael Castle (Delaware) and Lynn Wolsey (California) focused on needs for improving Head Start. A written statement by Representative Ciro Rodriguez (Texas) argues that the proposed block funding of Head Start will not meet poor children's needs and will not work for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start. Testimony was offered by two panels of witnesses, the first comprised of Assistant Secretary for Children and Family Services Wade Horn and Governor John Rowland of Connecticut, with the director of the Institute for Educational Sciences available for questions; and the second comprised of the author of a preschool language enrichment program, the chair of the National Head Start Association (NHSA), and the director of a not-for-profit child care development agency. Horn's testimony maintained that the President's proposal for offering states the opportunity to coordinate preschool programs with Head Start in exchange for meeting certain accountability requirements is not a block grant and assured the committee that states would be required to maintain the comprehensive nature of Head Start services, maintain their current level of state preschool funding, and explain how state and federal funds would be coordinated to promote school readiness. Governor Rowland outlined potential benefits of the President's plan. Questions for the first panel related to assessment of school readiness, states' commitment to preschool education, the role of and support for parent involvement, states' roles in setting program standards, and consequences of not submitting a plan. Testimony from the second panel

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focused on the impact of a language-rich curriculum on poor children, Head Start's successes, and recommendations for its future. The NHSA chair argued that goals for enhancing literacy/language program components and improving coordination could be met within the current program structure and questioned the wisdom of moving Head Start to the states in the middle of a major review of Head Start effectiveness. Questions focused on replicability of the language enrichment program, concerns that the Administration is trying to dismantle Head Start, current Head Start collaboration efforts, and states' commitment and ability to offer quality comprehensive programs within the climate of state economic shortfalls. The transcripts' ten appendices contain written statements and additional documents submitted for the record. (KB)

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HEAD START: WORKING TOWARDS IMPROVED RESULTS FOR CHILDREN

ED 480 614

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM
OF THE

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

HEARING HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC, MARCH 6, 2003

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HEARING ON HEAD START: WORKING TOWARDS IMPROVED RESULTS FOR CHILDREN

THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 2003

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM,

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE,

WASHINGTON, D.C.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:20 a.m., in Room 2175, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Michael N. Castle [chairman of the subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Castle, Osborne, Upton, Ehlers, Biggert, Wilson, Musgrave, Woolsey, Davis of California, Davis of Illinois, Case, Kucinich, Van Hollen, and Majette.

Ex officio present: Representative Miller.

Also present: Representative Payne.

Staff present: Julian Baer, Legislative Assistant; Pam Davidson, Professional Staff Member; Kevin Frank, Professional Staff Member; Kate Gorton, Professional Staff Member; Sally Lovejoy, Director of Education and Human Resources Policy; Alexa Marrero, Press Secretary; Maria Miller, Coalitions Director for Education Policy; Deborah L. Samantar, Committee Clerk/Intern Coordinator; John Lawrence, Minority Staff Director; Ruth Friedman, Minority Legislative Associate, Education; Joe Novotny, Minority Clerk/Staff Assistant, Education; and Linda Theil, Minority Legislative Associate, Education.

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OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN MICHAEL N. CASTLE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Chairman Castle. A quorum being present, the Subcommittee on Education Reform will come to order. My name is Mike Castle, and I am the chair of this committee. We do not have many overflow hearings here, so we are appreciative of the attendance. But I am sorry about the lack of seating for those who are standing.

I would like to first of all extend a welcome to Ms. Lynn Woolsey, who is the ranking member, and is new in this position of developing education policy in this country. I consider this subcommittee to be of great importance in the development of education agendas nation-wide. We are delighted to have Lynn helping with that.

In addition, I would like to welcome Tom Osborne of Nebraska, who was distinguished in another field before he arrived here. Mr. Osborne is as interested in children and mentoring and educational programs as anybody I have worked with on the committee. Tom, we are delighted to have you in that position, as well.

We are meeting here today to hear testimony on Head Start: Improving Results for Children. Under Committee Rule 12(b), opening statements are limited to the chairman, which I am, and the ranking minority member of the subcommittee, which is Ms. Woolsey. Therefore, if other members have statements, they may be included in the hearing record.

With that, I ask unanimous consent for the hearing record to remain open 14 days to allow members' statements and other extraneous material referenced during the hearing to be submitted in the official hearing record.

Without objection, so ordered. We will go to my opening statement.

I do want to thank all of you for joining us here today. I know you have a variety of interests for this rather important hearing on the impact of the Head Start Program preparing disadvantaged children for school. This marks the first hearing to help prepare members of the committee for reauthorization of Head Start, which is scheduled for this year.

Quality early care and education are critical for children, parents, the business community, and the success of welfare reform. Every day, approximately 12 million children and their families utilize some form of early childhood service. The Head Start Program is the centerpiece of the Federal Government's efforts to support quality early childhood education for our nation's most disadvantaged youth.

Since 1965, the Head Start Program has served nearly 20 million low-income children and their families. Today, Head Start serves over 900,000 children every day, and has nearly 1500

grantees across the United States. In my home state of Delaware, Head Start programs serve 1594 children, with state government funding an additional 464 four-year-olds.

Head Start was conceived to offer economically-disadvantaged children access to a level of comprehensive educational, health, and social services that meet or exceed similar opportunities available to more affluent children. The goal of the program is to provide disadvantaged students with a solid foundation that will prepare them for success in the public school system and later in life.

While the resources spent have been significant, results have sometimes been mixed. Research shows that children who participate in Head Start are better prepared to enter school than similar children who do not participate in this program. This is evidence that Head Start is working. But I believe we can do better.

States report that between 20 percent and nearly half of all children entering school are not prepared to succeed in school, and that the typical Head Start student still enters kindergarten far below the national norm. This achievement gap between typical Head Start students and other students is a challenge we should address, not ignore.

Thousands of disadvantaged children pass through Head Start every year without receiving the level of academic instruction and school readiness we are capable of providing for them. They enter kindergarten behind their more advantaged peers. If we do not expect more from Head Start, then we are letting these children down.

The No Child Left Behind Act emphasizes the importance of academic achievement in reading and math, and it sets forth a goal that all children become skilled readers by the end of third grade. Recognizing the important relationship between the quality of a child's early experiences and their readiness for school, states and schools are focusing greater attention on the cognitive and social development of young children before they enter kindergarten.

Head Start and other early childhood education programs are often the first line of defense in insuring that children attain the fundamental skills necessary for optimal reading development and overall school readiness. Last spring, the President announced the Good Start, Grow Smart initiative to improve early childhood education for millions of America's youngest children. As part of our work to improve Head Start, this committee will consider areas in which Head Start can be strengthened to improve the quality of the Head Start experience so that every Head Start child is prepared to be successful in school.

The Good Start, Grow Smart plan identifies the need for teachers to be well trained, the importance of aligning early childhood programs with state K-through-12 education goals, and the need for better information for parents and caregivers about the best practices in early childhood development.

During reauthorization, the committee also will consider how Head Start programs may enhance collaboration with other publicly-funded early care and education programs. By leveraging resources and establishing consistent program goals, the Head Start Program can

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become a critical component of a coordinated effort to provide high-quality early education to young children.

Finally, this committee will review the success of Head Start in delivering results for children. During the 1998 reauthorization, this committee made several changes to the law intended to place greater program emphasis on children's development of pre-literacy, language, and numeracy skills. Today, there is little evidence that Head Start children are more prepared for school than five years ago. As a result, we will seek to understand why these changes have not always translated into greater cognitive gains for children, and how we can do a better job of insuring that Head Start programs successfully deliver results.

While progress is necessary on the academic front, other non-academic services provided to children participating in Head Start are also important. Strengthening the academic focus of Head Start and preserving comprehensive services such as health and nutrition are important goals for Republicans and Democrats alike. Research makes clear that school readiness involves both academic development and social-emotional. Without one or the other, a child is less likely to succeed in school.

I have grown increasingly frustrated by false media accounts that Republicans wish to transform Head Start into an academic-only program that eliminates the comprehensive services currently provided by Head Start. It is time to stop pitting the various needs of children against one another. They are not competing priorities. To characterize it as such is insulting and demoralizing to the thousands of staff who sacrifice their time and energy helping these children every day.

Today, we will hear from experts who will help shed light on the Head Start Program, its strengths, and areas where it can be made stronger. Our witnesses' unique perspectives on Head Start will offer insights that will be tremendously helpful to the members of this committee as we work to improve the Head Start Program. We look forward to their comments.

With that, I would like to recognize Congresswoman Woolsey, who will also make a brief opening statement.

WRITTEN OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN MICHAEL N. CASTLE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES – SEE APPENDIX A

OPENING STATEMENT OF RANKING MINORITY MEMBER LYNN WOOLSEY, SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Ms. Woolsey. Thank you. As you know, this is my first hearing as the ranking member on the Education Reform Subcommittee, and I can say that I am finally a full adult here in the Congress.

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And I can't think of a better place to start than with the Head Start Program.

For nearly 40 years, the Head Start Program has been a symbol of this nation's commitment to a better life through early education for low-income children. We have documented research that Head Start is keeping that commitment. The results of the most recent survey conducted by the Department of Health and Human Services, called Head Start FACES, shows that Head Start is doing just what it promises, giving our nation's poorest children a head start in preparing them for school.

The FACES study shows that Head Start narrows the gap between low-income children and all other children in vocabulary and writing skills, improves social skills, leads to continued improvements in word knowledge, letter recognition, math skills, and writing skills relative to other children during their kindergarten year. In addition, other research shows that early Head Start is producing positive cognitive impacts for children by age two.

Does that mean that Head Start is perfect and doesn't need to make any changes? Of course not. Even the best program can be better. Head Start has made great progress towards improving the education of its teachers, but more is needed. Head Start must work to have more teachers with Bachelor's degrees in early childhood development, and we can help reach that goal by providing more funds for teachers' salaries and continuing education.

We need to strengthen, not weaken, Head Start's focus on comprehensive services. Head Start helps low-income children get ready for school by providing health services, parent training and support, nutrition, and development of social skills, as well as early childhood education. In young children, cognitive development cannot be separated from physical growth and family support. We should be moving towards full funding of Head Start, so that no child who is eligible for Head Start is turned away. And we should be expanding early Head Start.

At the same time, I would also like to examine ways that would give those communities not currently filling their Head Start programs the flexibility to admit children with slightly higher incomes. Because the current welfare program has moved many families into the ranks of the working poor, which has caused them to lose eligibility for Head Start at a time when their children most need these support services.

All of the changes that I am suggesting build on the strengths of the current Head Start Program, strengths that have been benefiting low-income children and their families for almost 40 years. As we move forward with this reauthorization, I hope we will keep in mind that Head Start is working. Head Start programs produce proven results. And there is no need to be reinventing a good early childhood program. One already exists, and that program is called Head Start.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I would like to ask unanimous consent to insert Congressman Ciro Rodriguez' remarks into the record.

WRITTEN OPENING STATEMENT OF RANKING MINORITY MEMBER LYNN WOOLSEY, SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES – SEE APPENDIX B

Chairman Castle. Without objection, the comments of Mr. Rodriguez will be inserted into the record.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE CIRO RODRIGUEZ, SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES – SEE APPENDIX C

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Ms. Woolsey, for your opening statement. We will turn now to our witnesses. We have two panels of witnesses today, and I will begin by introducing the first panel.

The first person who will speak is the Hon. Wade Horn. Dr. Horn is the assistant secretary for the administration for Children and Families at the Department of Health and Human Services. Prior to being appointed as assistant secretary, Dr. Horn was president of the National Fatherhood Initiative, whose mission is to increase the number of children growing up with involved, committed, and responsible fathers. During the Bush I administration, Dr. Horn served as the commissioner for Children, Youth, and Families, and chief of the Children's Bureau at the Department of Health and Human Services, and as the presidential appointee to the National Commission on Children from 1990 to 1993. Additionally, Dr. Horn served as an adjunct faculty member at Georgetown University's Public Policy Institute, and an affiliate scholar with the Hudson Institute from 1993 to 2001.

Dr. Ross Whitehurst is not going to testify today. He has testified here a number of times. He is here to answer questions. We may hear from him quite a bit. He is the director of the Institute for Educational Sciences in the U.S. Department of Education. He is one of the nation's leading experts on language and literacy development in young children.

Previously, Dr. Whitehurst held the position of assistant secretary for the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, which is a predecessor of the institute. For those who do not understand all that, he is basically the head of education research in the Department of Education. He has authored or edited five books and published more than a hundred papers on language and pre-reading development in children.

The second person who will address this subcommittee is Governor Rowland. Governor Rowland was first selected to the governorship of Connecticut in November of 1994. Previously, he served three terms in the United States House of Representatives, and two terms in the Connecticut State Legislature. Governor Rowland is the recipient of numerous awards and honors, including being the first governor to receive the Excellence in State Government award. He has maintained excellence in state government generally in his governorship. We are appreciative of

what he has done there, and appreciative of having him here today.

So with no further ado, we will hear first from Dr. Horn and then from Governor Rowland, and then the members here, who each have five minutes for a question-and-answer session that will follow.

STATEMENT OF WADE F. HORN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES; ACCOMPANIED BY RUSS WHITEHURST, DIRECTOR, INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Mr. Horn. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee. I appreciate the opportunity to testify before you today on the President's plan to strengthen Head Start to help insure that every child has the opportunity to enter school healthy and ready to learn.

As you mentioned, Mr. Chairman, Dr. Ross Whitehurst from the Department of Education is at the table with me. Also directly behind me is Windy Hill, the very capable associate commissioner for the Head Start Bureau and the Administration on Children and Families at HHS.

As you know, Head Start was launched in 1965 as an eight-week summer program for low-income children to help them better prepare for success in school and in life. With strong bipartisan support, Head Start has expanded over the past four decades, and now serves over 900,000 children and families each year.

In addition to Head Start, more than 40 states and the District of Columbia now have early childhood programs of their own, many of them modeled on Head Start. Because research has demonstrated the importance of providing comprehensive services in the preschool years, states now are involved in trying to integrate a multitude of other programs aimed at helping young children and their families. All told, federal and state governments currently spend some 23 billion dollars each year for child care and preschool education, and much more than that when you consider the other health, nutrition, and welfare-related programs that serve these same children and families.

The good news is that there are more resources currently available to support low-income children and families than at any other time in our nation's history. The not-so-good news is that while children in Head Start enter school further ahead than other economically-disadvantaged children who do not get Head Start and are not enrolled in a state-run preschool program, they continue to lag behind their more economically-advantaged peers.

Additionally, we see an alarming lack of coordination among many of the programs and services designed to meet the needs of this population. This lack of coordination has resulted in gaps and patchy areas in our safety net, to the detriment of young children and their families.

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To strengthen the Head Start Program, improve outcomes for low-income children, and promote the coordination and integration of comprehensive early care and education services, President Bush is asking Congress to include in the reauthorization of the Head Start Act a provision that will allow interested states to include Head Start in their preschool plans.

Under the President's proposals, states would be offered the opportunity to coordinate preschool programs with Head Start in exchange for meeting certain accountability requirements. States wishing to participate must submit a state plan to the secretaries of Health and Human Services and Education that address several fundamental issues concerning preschool education. The state plan must address how it will work with public school systems to develop goals for all preschool programs in the state, identify guidelines that preschool programs can use to achieve these goals, devise an accountability system to determine whether children are actually achieving these goals, provide professional development for preschool teachers and administrators, and help parents provide support for children to succeed in kindergarten. In addition, states must describe how they will maintain the comprehensive range of child development services for children in Head Start, including the provision of social, parental, and health services.

The President's proposal has several key characteristics that are unfortunately frequently misunderstood, misinterpreted, or overlooked altogether. I would like to set the record straight.

First, the President is not proposing a block grant of the Head Start funding to the states. In fact, Head Start will continue to be managed as a federal-to-local program, except in those instances where states choose to develop plans. Those plans would have to be approved by both the secretary of Health and Human Services and the secretary of Education, on the basis of comprehensive and integrated preschool services for low-income children.

Second, any state that takes advantage of this option will be required to make a commitment to maintain the integrity of the comprehensive nature of the Head Start services, including social, family, and health services.

Third, states that choose this option will be required to maintain their current level of state spending on preschool programs. In other words, states will not be able to cut back on state preschool spending because they now have Head Start dollars.

Finally, states will have to explain how they intend to coordinate the use of funds across all state and federal programs that have the purpose of promoting school readiness, as well as how they intend to administer the program.

The bottom line for the President is school readiness--improving learning experiences, and holding programs accountable for achieving those outcomes. Research tells us a great deal about the skills and knowledge children need to be successful in school. Success in school is a strong predictor of success in life.

As I suggested earlier, one of the reasons the Head Start Program has remained strong over the course of nearly four decades is that it has always been willing to adapt to accommodate to the changing needs of children and families. Now more than ever, economically-disadvantaged

children and their families need a strong coordinated system of early care and education.

The time has come to allow states the option to fully integrate Head Start into their preschool education planning. We can no longer afford to dissipate precious resources through overlapping and ill-coordinated programs. Most importantly, we cannot afford to have children slip through the gaps that such a cobbled up system inevitably creates, particularly when children with the greatest need for support continue to remain below national norms on school readiness.

Children and families deserve the best support that states and local communities can provide. The President asks that you give states the option of integrating Head Start, our nation's leading program for low-income preschoolers, into their planning for coordinated services.

I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of this committee for your commitment and dedication to the well-being of our nation's children. Thank you very much.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF WADE F. HORN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES; ACCOMPANIED BY RUSS WHITEHURST, DIRECTOR, INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION -- SEE APPENDIX D

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Dr. Horn, very much for your testimony. We look forward to having further discussion with you here in a minute, but first we will hear from Governor Rowland.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JOHN G. ROWLAND, GOVERNOR OF CONNECTICUT

Governor Rowland. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. I have prepared a statement that I have entered into the record, but I would like to sum up my remarks.

First and foremost, over these last few weeks, there have been a number of very exciting, interesting proposals and reforms coming from our administration. Welfare reform, of course, came years ago. We have now also been looking at Medicaid and Medicare reforms, and the nation's governors have been focused on that over the last several weeks. Maybe a little bit under the radar, the proposal for Head Start is now starting to seep out to the states, and many of my colleagues, fellow governors, are looking at this very exciting proposal.

I would like to give the state's, my state's, perspective, and to share with you our initial responses. First and foremost, this is a perfect logical response to problems that we face in our urban community. It is a breath of fresh air to combine efforts and to utilize all the resources of the Federal Government and of the state government, and of our local governments as well. It is also a logical step after Leave No Child Behind legislation.

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We received in the State of Connecticut approximately $40 million in Head Start funds, and we serve about 6,000 preschool children. Coincidentally, we also, the state, invest about $40 million, and we also serve an additional 6,000 children in a variety of different programs. By combining these efforts, we can better utilize our services and eliminate redundancy. More importantly, we will be able to serve more families, which I think is the goal of all of our states.

I would like to suggest to you, Mr. Chairman, the members of the committee, and to interested parties, that Connecticut would like to be the first state to accept the President's challenge. I see some tremendous benefits for our children and for our families. Number one, I see greater accountability; number two, greater coordination and more flexibility; and number three, higher standards to insure that our kids have the skills to start kindergarten.

For a relatively small state, we are very diverse. We are the wealthiest state in the country, yet we have some of the poorest communities and poorest cities in the country as well. As a result, we have some superior schools. We have to put our resources where they are needed, and for the most part, they are utilized in the urban communities.

But at the end of the day, I am pleased to report to you that in our fourth and eighth grades, our students are number one in math, number one in science, number one in reading, and number one in writing. I think a lot of that is because of the focus we have on pre-K programs. Presently, 75 percent of all public school kindergarten students participate in preschool programs. In the last five years, we increased that number of preschool slots by over 200 percent.

At one of our urban schools in the city of New Haven, eight out of ten kindergarten students attended preschool. I point out that the school poverty rate there is about 65 percent. In another urban school in Hartford, where the poverty rate is 74 percent, again, almost 80 percent of the children attended preschool.

We are clearly giving these kids a leg up. Clearly, we focused on those individuals, but we now have at least 15,000 families that we could serve, which is again probably twice as much as we are serving at this moment.

The President's plan can help us get there. The President's plan is attractive for states for a number of reasons that Wade has touched on as well. Number one, it is voluntary. If states do not want to participate, they do not have to. I can tell you that we are aggressively interested in participating. I have talked to a lot of my Head Start directors, and they are very interested in participating in this program. They have begun to submit letters to me, and I will be glad to share those with you today or at another time.

Number two, the plan is flexible. We can target funds where they're most needed. Something that goes on in New Haven may be different than in Hartford, and may be different than in one of the other school districts. So flexibility is key for us to take care of our families. It encourages partnership. I can show you instances where we have two buildings in the same location. One is the state-run preschool program and one is the Head Start Program. We can bring all of the stakeholders together, participate, really raise the standards, and have better quality and

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higher expectations for our kids.

I would like to conclude by saying that I have personally observed, unfortunately, the reality of our problems in our urban communities. About 10 years ago in our capital city of Hartford, the Hartford High School at that time had a high school dropout rate between ninth and tenth grade of over 50 percent. Fifty percent of those kids between ninth and tenth grade dropped out of school. We left those kids behind. We also found that the reason they fell behind is that we had social promotion. They just pushed the kids along. And by the time they got to ninth grade, they were 16. They just dropped out of school. We had more teenage girls become pregnant than actually graduate from the high school.

After some time, we actually took over the school system. The State of Connecticut took over and appointed a State Board of Trustees, at the suggestion and the urging of the local political officials and the local school board. Over the last five or six years, we have increased the pre-K programs, started summer schools that previously did not exist, and basically set a standard stating that if you are not prepared to go from third grade to fourth grade, you have to go to summer school, and the state paid for it.

The reason I raise that issue is that everybody was focusing on the high school saying the high school is broken. But we knew better. We knew what was broken could be found earlier on. We need to make sure that our kids are reading well by third grade, and that is the most important goal that we should all have in our states.

I can report to you after five or six years of the state running the Hartford school systems, the high school dropout rate is now below 10 percent, and the reading skills and the testing of the children have increased dramatically.

We only have one chance to educate these children. When these students at age 16 drop out of school, we do not get a chance to say, "Hey, listen. We did not do it right this time. Let's start over." So I am very excited, and I think my fellow governors will be excited about this initiative and about the flexibility and capabilities of using state taxpayer dollars – state, federal, and local – best utilized to take care not only of the young students, but also of the families as well.

So I would say to you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, give us a chance. Give the states an opportunity, and we will show you that we can increase the quality of life for these students and for the families that we all represent. Thank you very much.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JOHN G. ROWLAND, GOVERNOR OF CONNECTICUT – SEE APPENDIX E

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Governor. Thank you, Dr. Horn. I will start by yielding five minutes to myself.

Let me just say to the members here that we are probably going to have to enforce the five-minute rule fairly tightly today, because we have a second panel. I am not sure what the floor

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activity is going to be. But having said that, we have a lot of questions to ask all of you.

And I am going to start with you, Governor. I am going to make you sort of a trial lawyer here, if I can, because I've got a hunch that the jury is out here. There is probably a lot of Head Start providers here who are saying, ``You know, Governor Rowland looks like a very competent and good governor, but I am not too sure about this plan of the states taking over Head Start. I'm from a big state. I'm from Michigan or Texas or California or someplace, and this makes me a little bit anxious."

Having been a governor of a small state, I tend to sympathize--not sympathize, but agree with you--in terms of what can get done. I think some of the things you talked about – the flexibility, targeting funds, and encouraging partnerships, et cetera, make sense. But if I were a Head Start provider receiving money directly, perhaps having a little more flexibility in terms of what I was doing, I might be a little bit anxious about this.

Can you go further on that and try to allay the concerns and even fears of some of those who are presently administering programs in terms of what another level of what they may view as bureaucracy might mean to them?

Governor Rowland. Mr. Chairman, I think that's a great question. I would be glad to respond. I will give you a philosophical response first.

I have been in government pretty much most of the last 22 years. My observation, having been a legislator and a member of the Congress and governor over the last eight years, is that in government, generally speaking, everyone is in favor of progress, as long as there is no change. There is a lot of truth to that, I am afraid. People are afraid of change, and especially those of us that run programs.

I have heard it suggested, and I have seen some of the articles that have said something to the effect, ``Well, we can't possibly let states run these programs. They don't care as much as we do." I would humbly suggest that I think governors-- and I will speak for all the governors--care deeply about all of our children, regardless of age, but specifically these younger children, getting them ready for kindergarten. Our sincere interest is probably far deeper than a bureaucrat from Washington that maybe has not passed through my state effort.

The mere fact is that so many states have started pre-K programs. We have got pre-K programs funded from local community action agencies, from the local cities and towns, and of course from the state. The fact is that my state, as many others have, have literally matched the same expenditure that the Federal Government has made, doing the same thing.

So I think if you looked across the spectrum of states, large and small, Republican and Democrat, you will find governors with a razor-like focus on education. It's the most important issue that we have to contend with. We know where the problems are, we live it every day, we are with these providers.

I would conclude by telling you that I contacted my largest Head Start provider and ran through some of the ideas that are being proposed, and he was very excited about it. He sent me a letter, and I will leave it with you. It says, ''We are willing to lend our support and want to work with you in the development of this program.'' The other comment he makes, ''There is concern in Congress that some states may give short shrift to these important elements of the program if they are no longer operated under the federal program. However, many of the Connecticut community action agency executive directors and Head Start directors I've talked with feel quite confident that you and your commissioners will be committed to developing an outstanding program.''

I think that that speaks for all the governors. This is not about saving money. This is not about cutting programs. This is about enriching existing programs, and I think that is the bottom line.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Governor. We will, of course, accept the letter for the record.

WRITTEN DOCUMENT SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE JOHN G. ROWLAND, GOVERNOR OF CONNECTICUT – SEE APPENDIX F

Chairman Castle. Let me turn quickly, if I can, to Dr. Horn. Dr. Whitehurst may want to get involved with this, also. But part of the discussion has been that Head Start is planning to assess--and that is the key word here--the school readiness of all four-year-olds in Head Start. Many people take the word ''assess,'' and they immediately say ''testing,'' and they suggest that four-year-olds are too young to be tested. I am not sure, but I think that is probably correct. But I am not sure ''assessed'' necessarily means ''testing.''

I am very interested in matters of assessment methods insuring that the programs are working, and to hold them accountable. In addition to the social services, which we all agree are needed, part of this is to prepare these kids for school. How can we determine if that is being done? What are the methodologies that could be used?

Mr. Horn. As you know, the President feels very strongly that one of the things that we need to do increasingly in government is manage by results--that is, to look at outcomes. Good intentions are better than bad intentions, but good intentions are not good enough. We also have to determine whether our good intentions are actually having good outcomes for whomever the constituents are for a particular social program, including the Head Start Program.

There are a lot of ways of assessing children. There are good ways of assessing children and bad ways of assessing children. We assess infants at one minute and five minutes after they are born. It's called an Apgar score. Pediatricians assess children all the time in their offices. They assess them against certain developmental norms to determine whether there's a problem in a child's development. I'm a child psychologist. I assess children all the time in the preschool years.

We are not talking about sitting four-year-olds down in rows of desks with number two pencils filling in bubble sheets. What we are talking about is trying to determine a way in which we can have a better sense about whether the programs, the Head Start programs, are, in fact, achieving the kinds of outcomes and results we all want for children. Are they developing the early

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emergent literacy skills, for example, that this Congress in 1998 indicated that we need to pay more attention to in the Head Start Program?

With most of the tools we use for assessing young children, they experience kind of a game-like evaluation. For example, there is the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test that assesses the degree to which children's vocabulary is progressing. What happens is that you show four pictures to a child, and ask, ''show me the truck," and he points to the truck, if he knows the word. It has a game-like quality to it.

So it is not a question about whether or not it is possible to assess young children. We do it all the time. We do it with the FACES study that Congresswoman Woolsey talked about earlier, and we do assessments with kids in that context. Head Start programs all across the country do assessments every day.

There are ways of doing it that are reliable and valid, and ways of doing it that are not. What we are committed to is making sure that we engage a process where we can determine whether children are, in fact, benefiting from their experience in Head Start, and doing it in developmentally appropriate ways.

Chairman Castle. Thank you.

Dr. Whitehurst, if you can make a brief statement, because we want to try to keep moving.

Dr. Whitehurst. As Dr. Horn indicated, we are assessing children in the preschool period all the time. Most of what we know about the effectiveness of Head Start and other early childhood programs comes from the assessment of children as they're exiting those programs. Those assessments are done by the National Center for Education Statistics and its Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, the FACES group, and Health and Human Services We know that these measures can be done well and with reliability, and that they are incredibly predictive of later school success.

So it is difficult to know how we would ever be able to determine how effective we are at the preschool level unless we could pause, ask children a few questions, see how they answer the questions, and find out whether they have learned what they need to learn to get ready for school.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, sir.

Ms. Woolsey.

Ms. Woolsey. Thank you, Mr. Horn. Thank you, panel. The President says he is interested in school readiness for every child, and yet his budget actually slashes opportunities for children. Two hundred thousand children lose childcare. Five hundred and seventy thousand lose after-school care. Head Start barely receives a cost-of-living increase. IDEA preschool grants are frozen. $1.2 billion of CHIP funds are not restored that could prevent states from dropping children from health coverage in the future. And there is more. Leave No Child Behind is under-funded by billions of

dollars.

How in the world can we trust that this new proposal is going to be supported by anything beyond words? And how can Governor Rowland be sure that after two years, the states are not going to be fully responsible for these programs?

Mr. Horn. The point of this state option is to allow states who are interested in better coordinating activities in the preschool years to come in with a plan submitted to both the Secretary of HHS and the Secretary of Education. In the plan, they indicate how it is that they will better coordinate Head Start in a more efficient and effective way with other preschool services that are being delivered in the state.

There are certain requirements that the state will have to demonstrate in that plan. One of those requirements is that they must commit to maintaining at least the same level of state funding for pre-K programs as they currently spend. So this does not let states take Head Start money and substitute it for state dollars.

Ms. Woolsey. Well, okay. Let me take back some of my time and continue with the questioning.

Then that's already happening. Why do we have to duplicate? Why would we need_if the FACES study works, why do we need another one? Why do we have to duplicate? What are we looking for that we don't already know?

Mr. Horn. Well, in terms of the accountability system that the President announced within the context of Good Start, Grow Smart, the idea is to be able to determine at the grantee and local program level the degree to which grantees and local programs are achieving the proper outcomes for children. You cannot do that with the FACES study, because it is a nationally representative sample, but it is not reliable down to the grantee or local program level.

So the idea is to determine whether every Head Start grantee is actually achieving good results for kids. This is not a light switch test for those whom are not where we expect them to be, causing us to take your funding away if you are not achieving a certain result. It is intended to identify those grantees that may be in need of additional technical assistance so that we can provide that technical assistance so those programs can achieve.

Ms. Woolsey. All right. Who's going to pay for that technical assistance, and where's the money coming from, and who's it going to take it away from?

Mr. Horn. We have an enormous amount of technical assistance money within the current Head Start system, and we think there is adequate resources to pay for that.

Ms. Woolsey. Thank you. Governor?

Governor Rowland. I would be glad, first and foremost, to answer your last question.

Ms. Woolsey. Well, wait a minute. I have a question to ask you first. First I'd like to know.

Governor Rowland. I would be glad to answer the other ones as well.

Ms. Woolsey. Well, that's all right. But let me do my thing, okay?

Governor Rowland. Okay.

Ms. Woolsey. This is my show. Do you represent the governors in the Governors' Association on this question, or just a small group? Because it's my understanding that the association has not agreed.

Governor Rowland. That is correct. I am the lead governor on education, as appointed by the executive committee and the chairman of the National Governors' Association. In my opening remarks, I indicated that we have been consumed with Medicaid reform. We have just had a National Governors' meeting last weekend.

Ms. Woolsey. But on Head Start...

Governor Rowland. Correct.

Ms. Woolsey. Are you representing all of the governors on that?

Governor Rowland. If you let me finish my statement, I will be glad to tell you.

Ms. Woolsey. Well, we're running out of time.

Governor Rowland. I understand. We have not had a chance at the National Governors' level to focus on the Head Start initiative, because it came after our meeting.

So I am not representing the National Governors' Association. But I will tell you, to answer the last part of your question, I would be glad, I would be pleased, to be fully responsible for the Head Start programs in my state.

Ms. Woolsey. Without federal funding?

Governor Rowland. Oh, no. With federal funding.

Ms. Woolsey. Oh, well, I'm saying I think you have to risk that once it's given to you with the President's budgets letting children down so greatly; they could let you down there, too.

Governor Rowland. Let me answer that. I do not agree with that summation whatsoever. As a matter of fact, since the President took office, he has increased funding to the Department of Education by over $11 billion. He has also increased Title I funding.

Ms. Woolsey. Let me ask you another question before we hang up here.

Governor Rowland. Can I answer?

Ms. Woolsey. Okay. My one other question is hasn't Head Start helped Connecticut meet these great records you have in education?

Governor Rowland. Absolutely.

Ms. Woolsey. And what percentage of your preschoolers were in Head Start?

Governor Rowland. Seventy-five percent.

Ms. Woolsey. Well, there you go. Thank you.

Governor Rowland. Thank you, Ms. Woolsey. It should be a hundred percent.

Chairman Castle. Mr. Osborne.

Mr. Osborne. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Dr. Horn, I would like to first of all commend you. I think you have been involved in the fatherhood initiative. My personal assessment is that if we had less absent fathers, it would not necessarily mean we could do away with Head Start, but it would greatly help our current problem.

As you know, there are roughly 18 million children without fathers in our country today, and certainly most of those children live below the poverty level. These children engender some cultural poverty because of that situation. Therefore, I know that part of this initiative is to try to incorporate parents. Many times, there is only one in the Head Start Program. I wondered if you could comment on what the vision of this particular mission is to involve parents in Head Start to a greater degree.

Mr. Horn. Well, as you know, Congressman, Head Start has always been about involving parents. I think we have a very good track record of involving parents in the program. On the issue of fatherhood, one of the things we have done over the last two years is provide some supplemental grants to local grantees to implement innovative programs reaching out to the fathers of the children in Head Start, whether or not they're living with the children themselves. That is to try to encourage their involvement in the Head Start Program as well.

As part of the President's proposal, one of the things that the state would have to do would be to indicate how, under their plan, they would continue to involve parents in positive and healthy ways in both the Head Start and preschool programs in their state.

In addition to that, a big portion of the Good Start, Grow Smart initiative that the President announced last year, is obtaining the latest research-based information about child development of early literacy skills, getting that information not just into the hands of Head Start teachers, not just into the hands of state preschool program teachers, not just into the hands of child care providers,

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but also into the hands of parents, whether their children are involved in any of those programs or not. This administration feels strongly, as I know that you do also, that parents are_the first and more important teachers of their children, and this is part of the Head Start philosophy.

I think that Head Start has a long and very important history in involving parents in the program. We' have also tried to do some innovative work in reaching out to fathers. Under the state option, the state would have to indicate how they would continue that kind of work.

Mr. Osborne. Please say some more about involving fathers. Does this involve some type of financial incentive? Or how is this going to happen?

Mr. Horn. There are a variety of different innovative programs that are actually occurring now in Head Start programs around the country. There is a program called Good Guys that is getting the fathers involved, getting them to volunteer in the Head Start classroom, for example. The program also helps them in terms of family literacy efforts, so that if a father is not fully literate himself, we can help him obtain those literacy skills, enabling him to read to his child at home. The Good Guys program also gets them connected to a variety of social services programs that are in the community, programs such as employment programs, if that is necessary, and also involved in positive ways with child support enforcement, if that is an issue.

So we are seeing a very interesting set of innovative efforts going on through local Head Start programs that are trying to reach out to fathers, as well as mothers, to get them involved in the early education of their children.

Mr. Osborne. Okay. Well, thank you. I think that's really critical. As you know, I am interested in mentoring. Sometimes the damage has been done by age three or four, and mentors do not really function very well until about the fifth or sixth grade. So I believe that this is a very important program.

Governor, I would like to ask you a question. Head Start includes some performance standards. I wonder if you could comment on how allowing states to determine the standards for programs serving Head Start strengthens the programs.

Governor Rowland. Thank you, Congressman. First and foremost, engaging the states and setting the standards, that is what it is all about. To answer some of the previous questions before I was cut off, the states are in the business of educating children. I am a fan of Head Start, as most governors are, but I am also a fan of being able to have some say about the standards and being able to raise the standards if I want to, or if the state, in its wisdom, would like to do that.

One of the lines that we have in Connecticut pertains to raising expectations. When I talked about that Hartford High School situation, I actually went and met with the principal of that school. The principal looked at me and said, ''Governor, you don't understand. This is the best these kids can do." I looked at him, and I said, ''Now I know what the problem is here. It's you." I got involved in actually removing that principal.

We strongly believe in raising standards, meeting standards, criteria, and objective analysis. No one should be afraid of analysis and assessment. I know that we're all running and hiding because the Federal Government is going to take over and tell us what to do. Head Start is a great program. We can make it better. We want the opportunity to make it better. It is not about cutting funding. The funding is there.

I still have 15,000 children that I would like to serve. We serve 6,000 with Head Start. We serve 6,000 with other state and local programs. There is another 15,000 that we should be serving, so that we do not end up with that high school dropout rate and the problems years later. In getting our children ready and prepared to read and to learn, there should be no fear.

And I am hearing some of the same arguments I heard about welfare reform five or six years ago. ``Oh, my gosh. The world will end if we reform the welfare system.'' However, it is the best thing we have ever done at the state level. This could be one of the best things we can do for children in our states.

Mr. Osborne. Thank you.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Governor. Congressman Case is yielded to for five minutes.

Mr. Case. Thank you, Mr. Chair. And I want to congratulate my new ranking minority member publicly, although I am a little worried about her definition of adulthood, personally. But I will try to get on with things.

Governor, I guess I agree with your maxim about progress and change, although I have got two maxims, too, learned from a number of years of service in state government as well. And one is do not fix what does not need fixing, and the second maxim is be very wary of what the Federal Government offers as a choice.

Going to the second maxim, Doctor, exactly what, under the President's proposal, are the consequences to a state or to a state Head Start Program of a decision not to take advantage of what the Federal Government offers as a choice?

Mr. Horn. If a state does not choose to submit a plan under this option, then the Head Start Program would continue to operate as it does currently, as a direct federal-to-local grantee program.

Mr. Case. There are absolutely no consequences other than that. It's totally, fully – and I really want to make very sure of this – up to the state whether it decides, if it decides, that it likes the way that it is delivering its services through the Head Start centers, there's no consequence, direct or indirect.

Mr. Horn. Unequivocally, there is no consequence. It will operate exactly the way it does currently.

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Mr. Case. So those states that want to take advantage, as the Governor wants to, of this option can do so, and those states that think the system that they have is functioning the way it is, they're free to do that too.

Mr. Horn. Absolutely.

Mr. Case. I'm trying to get some sense here of what's broken. You know, the states come to the Federal Government and say that a lot of things are broken. ``Help us.'' And the private providers come to the Federal Government and say, in a lot of situations, ``This is broken. Help us.'' And I just don't feel or hear that critical mass of complaint about Head Start. What I hear is that Head Start is a, and maybe I'm just hearing it from my state, because things are working well. But certainly beyond the State of Hawaii, it doesn't seem to me that there's a great dissatisfaction with Head Start the way that it's operating, that there is a great compulsion to change.

You mentioned a couple of things in your testimony. You mentioned, I think you used the term ``lack of coordination.'' I don't know why a state couldn't choose to coordinate without the Federal Government becoming involved in some kind of a reform effort.

So I'm searching for what we're trying to fix here, because we obviously have a program out there that seems to be working pretty well. Now, I assume your answer is going to be somewhere along the lines of ``Well, this gives the state the option, the choice, whatever, to get involved as a state government and hook in preschool education.'' But why isn't that something that can and is out there occurring now, without, you know, going through all of these bells and whistles? Why are we doing this?

Mr. Horn. Well, first of all, I will address your issue about whether the governors, in fact, believe that there ought to be innovation in terms of increasing their ability to coordinate the state-operated programs with Head Start. Actually, it is the official position of the National Governors' Association that that be so.

Mr. Case. I'm sorry. Say that one more time?

Mr. Horn. In fact, it is the official position of the National Governors' Association that they would like to have the opportunity to strengthen their ability to collaborate and coordinate state-administered programs with Head Start.

I have here, and I would be very happy to submit this for the record, their policy on Head Start. It is titled ``HR8 Head Start Strengthen and Collaboration Policy.'' It says, in part, ``Governors believe there is an increased need for greater collaboration among all programs that provide services to children, including Head Start.''

It goes on to say, ``The various streams of funding for child care and early childhood programs make it difficult to encourage collaboration between Head Start and child care programs.'' It says, ``States should have the opportunity to provide direct input and monitoring, as well as decisions about funding new grantees, or refunding and expanding existing grantees.''

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This is from the National Governors' Association's web site. I would be very, very pleased to submit this for the record and your consideration.

WRITTEN DOCUMENT SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY WADE F. HORN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES – SEE APPENDIX G

Mr. Case. I'm sorry. The thing that you're saying is broken is the state governors saying that they want more say, influence, ability to

Governor Rowland. If I may, I would like to take a crack at it. I do not think anybody is suggesting that Head Start is broken. What we are suggesting, and I think many governors will agree, is that we want to make it better.

Why does the State of Connecticut spend $40 million in addition to what is spent by Head Start? It is because governors and state legislatures, Republicans and Democrats alike, understand the crucial need to prepare these children as soon as possible. We have after-school programs, and before-school programs. The days of governors showing up saying ``Give us more money'' are over. These are the days of governors showing up and saying, ``Allow us to be innovative. Allow us to be creative. Allow us to work with the federal dollars. Allow us to be involved in the standards. Allow us to stop the duplication of having one building with a Head Start program and another building with a city-run or state-run program, or even a privately-run program."

In our case, the focus is reaching out to those 15,000 kids, pre-K, that could be served, or better served, with the same funding levels. We have tough economic conditions in all of our states. Forty-five states have budget deficits. You are going to see states cutting back on these programs because everybody has to take a hit. All the more reason to be able to utilize the federal dollars and the state dollars to get these kids ready to learn and give them a real head start in life.

We are not talking about it being broken. This is an enhancement, an improvement, and the governors want to be a part of it.

Mr. Case. Thank you. I would simply suggest in closing that we need to be careful when we try to fix something that's doing pretty well not to make it worse. And that's my concern here. There's too many bells, whistles, and conditions. We're going to end up going in the wrong direction. Thank you.

Chairman Castle. Ms. Biggert.

Mrs. Biggert. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I probably am the only Member of Congress who has worked in a Head Start program. I spent a summer many years ago, the first year of Head Start, working as a volunteer out of Hull House in Chicago.

Now, that was a long time ago. I have recently been visiting Head Start programs in my home State of Illinois. I have to tell you how impressed I am. For one thing, they have come a long

way, since that early time when I worked in a Hispanic neighborhood. I spoke no Spanish, so I would run home every day and turn on Sesame Street so I could learn how to count and do some of the words to communicate with these youngsters. They probably learned English a lot faster than I could learn Spanish, which is another thing I think that needs work.

By going out to visit the Head Start and the Early Start centers, I found that they are really doing so many things that you are talking about. They have partnered with the community colleges to insure that all of the teachers have either a Bachelor's degree, have taken specific courses for an Associate's degree in accordance to what has been required since 1998.

I, too, have concerns, particularly with the given state's financial crisis. Certainly my state is one of those that will dilute Head Start by having the other programs. I have a real fear about that. It I so important and I think that this is such a successful program, we should just provide more funds for Head Start and have more Head Start programs, because there certainly are many more eligible.

When the Head Start Program in my area does not have slots for children, they have home care. They will put the children into home care and give them what they are doing within the school to provide those children the opportunity to move into a slot when it becomes available. They already have the technical assistance. Vision and the hearing is so important to identify in children early so that they will not have problems, but that has been addressed. I do not hear about the expansion of that.

They also have a fatherhood program. In fact, they work very, very closely with all of the parents. They have a parent council, the head of the fatherhood program. There were many parents that were at the school the day I visited. I do not think it was planned just because I was going to be there. I had the ability to discuss with them and I found out they come and volunteer.

They have book sales. They also have the libraries that send people to come in for the children. The parents are very, very involved, and there is a partnership with the community. They have both a half-day program and a full-day program. They have childcare as well, so that some of those kids that arrive at 6:00 in the morning and leave late, perhaps 6:00 at night, remain there. The whole school is really set up with all of the educational tools. These kids are bright, interested, lively, and really enjoying what they are doing. I think that is the most important, because they are looking at all of the educational tools that they could use.

But again, I just really have problems with taking a successful program, combining it, and making it bigger. It is always the funding. This is one time I think I can say the funding has really made such a dramatic difference. We are not just throwing money into a program and thinking that fixes it. I believe this does.

This is a nutritional program. They said that some of these kids have no food, a good meal, except for the breakfast and the lunch that they receive, or the lunch and the evening snack. I caution you to be very, very careful that if we are going to do this plan, we must provide funding that is not going to let this program slip at all.

I think I have taken up all my time. I am sorry. Thank you.

Chairman Castle. Unfortunately, we have a vote situation. That is part of our responsibility, too. It may be the greatest part of our responsibility. We have three votes on the floor. I would like to explain, because there are a lot of guests here. The first vote is 15 minutes, of which there are about 10 minutes left. Governor Rowland will appreciate that they have decided to enforce the 15-minute rule very strictly. If you are not there, you do not vote. Unfortunately, we are going to have to break so we make sure we get everybody there in time.

Then we have two more votes. Because the first vote is a final vote on a bill, and then there will be a couple of procedural votes. I have a hunch the second vote is going to be 15 minutes, also, but I am just guessing that. Maybe not. Then there will be a five-minute vote. We may have literally minutes before we can reconvene here. I do not know the schedules of our witnesses who are here and those who are going to testify in the second panel. As soon as that last vote is over, we will try to get right back here and get into session and continue the hearing. We probably will not have a lunch break. We will just keep going until we have another vote pattern or something of that nature.

But I am going to predict that we will be gone for at least 30 minutes now, or perhaps even a little bit longer, unfortunately. I hope that does not inconvenience people too very much. If you want to take a little break or get lunch or whatever, we will come back and do what we can. I apologize to the witnesses. Hopefully, you will be able to remain and we'll be able to resume with those who have not yet had a chance to do their questioning.

So with that, we stand in recess until the votes are complete.

[Recess.]

Chairman Castle. We will resume the subcommittee meeting. I apologize. The votes worked out as we expected, so we are back when we expected to be back. We are going to take people as they come back in order to keep things moving, because we do have another panel. We are starting to lose time. People have other appointments. So we will go now to Mr. Davis for his five minutes.

Mr. Davis. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And I want to thank you and the ranking member for arranging for us to have the opportunity to participate in this hearing. I was noting that my colleague had not returned yet from Illinois. But had Representative Biggert been here, I wanted to say how fortunate I was that she had come to my district to visit Hull House. And that may have helped to shape her views, and I appreciate them very much.

Gentlemen, let me ask you, my assessment suggests to me that Head Start has been and consistently continues to be the most effective of all the programs that I watched develop as I was a young person dealing with the civil rights movement, the citizen action, the war on poverty, that of all the programs that emerged during that time, Head Start has been evaluated by many as being the most effective and the most consistent. And I know that there are some people who talk about the inability of some children to reach national norms as a concern and consideration.

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Let me just ask, do we have any expectations when children who have been significantly deprived are expected to reach or catch up to national norms?

Mr. Whitehurst. Consistent with the philosophy that was expressed in the No Child Left Behind Act, there is both reason to hope and reason to believe that children can learn and be taught, and that socioeconomic background is not a limit on what children can achieve. To use the President's phrase, we cannot get into the soft bigotry of low expectations. We need to believe that children from low-income neighborhoods can learn letters of the alphabet. They can learn the meaning of words. They can learn to communicate successfully with others. If we do that, they will prosper and do well in school.

Mr. Davis. So when we talk about standards and evaluate and compare programs that might be located in certain type neighborhoods, isn't it an indictment of them, or is it a criticism of them when they're characterized as not having been able to come up to the standards or to reach national norms?

Mr. Horn. Well, first, let me be clear. My perspective is that Head Start has been an effective program, and that Head Start does, in fact, generate gains for children who are enrolled in Head Start. These gains are superior to children from similarly economically-disadvantaged backgrounds who do not get an opportunity to enroll in Head Start or a state preschool program.

However, the research also shows while they do make gains, they continue to lag behind their more economically-advantaged peers. Rather than seeing that as a club with which we should bash Head Start programs for not doing well enough, what we ought to do is see it as a challenge for us to try to do even better.

That is what this proposal is about. It is not about using it as a club, but as a challenge. If we are serious about leaving no child behind, then we ought to say that means poor kids too. We should not leave them just a little bit behind; we should not leave them behind at all.

This is about working together with the Head Start community and other systems within the state to have better outcomes for children. That is the point- how can we achieve better outcomes for kids.

Mr. Davis. Governor Rowland, let me just ask you, if the states are given Head Start without performance standards, without any additional funding, and given the fact, as we've already heard, that many states are experiencing serious budgetary difficulties, deficits, and other kinds of constraints, do you think that there might be any possibility that states might attempt to shift and move around or manipulate some of the moneys to plug up holes and gaps that might appear elsewhere in the budget?

Governor Rowland. I will be glad to answer your question with a question. Why would we do that? I say that because the most fundamental responsibility of state government, the most fundamental responsibility and the primary responsibility of our state legislatures, is to educate our children. The question was posed whether I would be supportive of the state taking over Head

Start, and I said we would be glad to.

I think what needs to be noted is what one of the press people asked me at the break, ``Well, why are you interested in this?'' I said, ``Because we are interested in making sure that every child has the same capabilities, the same experiences, and the same head start.''

Now, the question I want to ask is that if Head Start was so perfect – and I am a huge supporter of Head Start, I have been for the last 20 years – why would some 42 states over the last half-dozen years start up their own state-funded programs that are pre-K, focusing on literacy, focusing on reading, and certainly very similar to the goals of Head Start?

My point is that to suggest- and governors Republican and Democrat will come together on this- that why we would want to consolidate a program or take over a federal program so we can do less? There isn't a governor in this country that wants to do less for children or less for education, even in tough budgetary times. As long as you have minimum standards, as long as the funding is coming in from the feds, which it will, I can better utilize those resources.

Right now in Connecticut, Head Start is 88 percent utilization. Why is that? Why is it only 88 percent? Why isn't it a hundred percent? The answer is because some of the other day care programs are full-day or year-long or more convenient. The reason for that is we are now in a post-welfare reform society. Perhaps 10 years ago, before welfare reform, having your child come home at noon or 1:00 was okay. But now, in my state, with 40,000 people off of welfare and working, they need a year-around or a full day care facility. Head Start in that particular city or town may not fit the bill.

Mr. Davis. Let me just- if I could conclude, Mr. Chairman, by asking, with the new emphasis on the additional focus on testing-and I know you've indicated that you didn't think that individuals might shift anything around, or that everybody wants to make the most effective use. And I think all of that's great conversation. I come from a state where we have school districts that get three times as much money as other school districts. You know, one district might get $5,000 per pupil. That's what they spend. Another one might spend 15,000. And so good intentions, I think, are always wonderful.

Do you think that there is any possibility that any of the money that is needed for the new focus on testing might be shifted from parental involvement activity, which I think is one of the most effective instruments of Head Start_

Chairman Castle. Mr. Davis, could you finish?

Mr. Davis. I've concluded, yes.

Chairman Castle. You have concluded? You have no question? Okay, good.

Governor Rowland. I will give a 30-second response. All of our programs, either Head Start and/or our own state-funded programs, have a real focus on involving the parents. In many cases, the mayors and first selectmen, the superintendents of school are involved. We have local councils

that are intimately involved in all aspects of the program in their location.

Chairman Castle. Thank you.

Ms. Majette.

Ms. Majette. Good morning. Thank you. Good morning, gentlemen. I represent the 4th District in Georgia, which some people call suburban Atlanta. And I'm also a product of the public school system in New York, and have children in the public school system in Georgia. And my concern is that we are not really focusing on being able to help parents prepare their children for being educated in the public schools. I know that Head Start has a component that addresses this issue, and there's also the Even Start Program. But it's my understanding that the Even Start Program is going to be basically cut out.

My concern is how we are going to continue the process, which I know works, of having parental involvement: of making sure that parents are properly prepared to prepare their children to be educated? What can you tell me about how that is going to be incorporated in the Head Start Program, given the fact that Even Start is going to be gone?

Mr. Horn. Well, Head Start has always had parental involvement as one of its major components. A piece of that is not just parents volunteering in the classroom, but also determining what kinds of needs parents have so they can be effective teachers to their children.

That is not going to go away under the President's proposal. There is a requirement that states that choose this option must, as part of their plan, indicate several things about parents. Number one, they have to indicate how they would continue to provide parent involvement under this state option. Secondly, they would have to state how they would continue to provide comprehensive services through Head Start. If they exercise this option, they must provide these social services not just to the children, but also to the parents. It would also require that the states publish whatever information they have about outcomes for kids in various centers, so that parents can take that into consideration in terms of where they want to place their children in terms of preschool experience.

I think that the President's proposal is built on the assumption that parent involvement is very important, and that we want to make sure that if states exercise this option, they will continue to see parent involvement as a critical aspect of what they do.

Ms. Majette. Well, I think that's a key point, though. You keep saying "if" states choose that option. I mean, you've said this is going to be an option. It's not something that's going to be provided state-by-state. As the Governor observed earlier, the states don't always operate with the same wisdom.

And so I'm concerned that by making this sort of a choice, the either/or, that some states will not make the right choice, and that will work to the detriment of children and parents. Am I not understanding what you're saying?

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Mr. Horn. That is incorrect, Congresswoman. Under the President's proposal, if a state does not choose the option, then the program will continue to operate as it currently operates, which includes a requirement in the local Head Start programs under the parent involvement aspect to both get parents involved in the program, and also to deliver services to the parents. None of that is going to change.

Ms. Majette. It's not going to change, but it's not going to be enhanced, given the fact that the Even Start Program won't continue to operate?

Mr. Whitehurst. Let me correct that information. In fact, the President's budget proposal for 2004 continues funding for Even Start. There has been no proposal to eliminate the Even Start Program.

Ms. Majette. All right. I have another question, if I still have time remaining.

Chairman Castle. Certainly. One more question would be fine.

Ms. Majette. With respect to the changes that are being proposed by the administration, how will this affect migrant children? If they move from state to state, will they have to be recertified as they move from state-to-state? How are they going to be affected by this?

Mr. Horn. The migrant Head Start Program would remain as it currently is, and would not be part of the state option.

Ms. Majette. So the states won't have to make that kind of a choice.

Mr. Horn. No. Under the President's proposal, the migrant Head Start Program would continue to operate exactly as it is now.

Ms. Majette. All right. Thank you.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Ms. Majette. We are going to move on to the second panel, because we have been held up. We would love to have another round of questions, but unfortunately, time does not allow it today.

Let me thank you all. We know you have significant schedules, Dr. Whitehurst and Dr. Horn. Governor Rowland, thank you for coming down from Connecticut and joining your former House comrades here. We appreciate your participation as well, and we will obviously absorb all that you said, as well as your written statements as we continue to look at Head Start reauthorization for sometime later this year.

So with that, you stand excused, with our thanks. The second panel will start to convene. The staff will start to put up the names. It will take just a few minutes. Then we will go right into that next panel with the statements of the witnesses. We have sort of a standing recess here for just, hopefully, a couple minutes.

[Recess.]

Chairman Castle. The government actually delivered. We actually made that change in two minutes. I would just like to give us a little credit for it, since we are faulted for everything that happens out there.

We welcome our second panel. We are sorry you had to wait. As you know, this, unfortunately, happens, but we are going to go right to you. I will go through introductions quickly.

Our first witness in this panel-and I think they will be testifying in the order in which they are sitting facing us-is Ms. Nell Carvell of Southern Methodist University. Ms. Carvell is the senior advisor and director of an adjunct faculty at Southern Methodist University's Learning Therapy Program. Ms. Carvell's experience includes nearly 30 years of classroom instruction, training, and therapy. She is the author and developer of the Language Enrichment Activities Program, known as LEAP, and that has been implemented at the Cone Head Start Center.

The second witness will be Mr. Ron Herndon, and is the chairman of the National Head Start Association, probably known to many people in this room. Mr. Herndon has been serving as the chairman of the National Head Start Association since 1993, and previously served as the association's vice president and president of the National Head Start Directors' Association. As chairman, he has represented the views of the Head Start community to Congress, the administration, and the public. Since 1975, he has been director of the Albina Head Start Program, which is a full-day program serving more than 400 children from Portland, Oregon, and the surrounding areas.

Mr. Dwayne Crompton has joined us. He is the executive director of Karing for Children is our Main Concern Child Development Corporation, which is the longest name of any corporation we have had before us in the last year or two. Mr. Crompton has served as director of KCMC, a not-for-profit child care development agency, since 1980. Previously, Mr. Crompton acted as director of a child care agency, and was a school administrator and an elementary and preschool teacher. While director, Mr. Crompton has significantly expanded KCMC by developing early childhood partnerships, and creating a family and child development resource center.

Obviously, the same basic structure will apply. Each of you will have five minutes to testify, and then the members who are present will each take five minutes for questions and answers. We will start with you, Ms. Carvell.

STATEMENT OF NELL R. CARVELL, DIRECTOR, THE LANGUAGE ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES PROGRAM AND HEAD START INITIATIVES, SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

Ms. Carvell. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you and discuss the federal Head Start Program. My testimony

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focuses on two major points.

First, I will show how a successful Head Start program in Dallas incorporating a language-rich curriculum produced outstanding results for children from poverty, and how hard data backs this up.

Second, such a language-rich curriculum complements existing Head Start programs, including the health, nutritional, and other valuable social services that Head Start currently provides. It does not take away from them.

Mr. Chairman and members of this committee, you do not have to be reminded that children who start behind stay behind. Particularly at risk of falling behind are children from low-income families who have less access to academic resources than their better-off peers.

In an attempt to reverse this trend, in 1990, the Texas Instruments Foundation teamed with Head Start of Greater Dallas to establish a model preschool, the Cone Center. The Cone Center is for four-year-old children in one of Dallas' most economically-depressed neighborhoods. It is an area plagued by both high rates of crime and unemployment.

During the center's first two years, from 1990 to 1992, the foundation funded a comprehensive array of services beyond those usually found in a Head Start center. It offered a year-around program, extended hours, a full-time staff that included a nurse practitioner and two social workers, a parent employment program, and increased staff benefits and salaries. These services were beneficial to many and resulted in gains by the Cone children in various developmental areas. But data revealed after two years that the children were no more ready for elementary school than those who had not benefited from the Cone services.

In 1993, the foundation approached Southern Methodist University to create a pre-reading curriculum for Cone. The result is the Language Enrichment Activities Program, LEAP. This is a research and scientifically-based program. It is age-appropriately interactive, and it is consistent with Head Start's focus on emotional and social development. LEAP aligns with the Head Start performance standards and with the NAEYC accreditation standards.

Among preschoolers, vocabulary, letter knowledge, phonological awareness, and social and emotional factors all have a significant impact on later success in school. A language-rich preschool curriculum focuses on developing the crucial pre-literacy skills.

In addition to reading to the children every day, teachers include language in a variety of activities, including games, pictures, experiences, and interactions with the children. These activities serve to build vocabulary and phonological awareness. They build knowledge of letters of the alphabet, and a basic awareness of math and science concepts, like measuring and counting and sorting. By incorporating counting and word games, nursery rhymes, fairy tales, and creative play in learning centers, children learn oral language in a child-centered environment. Most important, the knowledge and skills gained through the curriculum increases the children's chance

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for success in kindergarten and beyond.

Children who took the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, the ITBS, after their year at Cone and at the end of kindergarten prior to the implementation of LEAP scored on the average of the 20th to 30th percentile on a nationally standardized test. Last year, the new test, the Stanford 9, was given by Dallas school district at the end of kindergarten. And the children who had completed their year at Cone and been through kindergarten scored between the 75th and 87th percentile. This is well above the national norm.

In 2001, 85 percent of the third graders who attended Cone could read at or above grade level. Only 66 percent of Dallas's third graders who had not attended Cone could read at grade level. In 2002, the results were similar, with 90 percent of the Cone children reading at grade level at the end of third grade, and 74 percent of the others.

On the TAAS, which is Texas Assessment of Academic Skills, students who attended Cone scored an average of 15 percentile points above their peers at Frazier Elementary, who had not attended Cone. In fact, in 2001, a hundred percent of the third graders at Frazier passed the TAAS.

If you look at the result of the performance of the Cone children at Frazier, it really contributed to Frazier Elementary earning the coveted rank in Texas of ``exemplary'' as an elementary school. This is an exceptional feat in light of the fact that 98 percent of the families in the Frazier Elementary School district are low-income.

The success of LEAP at Cone has led various groups across the country to adopt LEAP. As of May 2003, approximately 45,000 children will have benefited from this curriculum. The children are in about 1100 Head Start and public school classrooms.

Now, while most of these classrooms are in Texas, teachers and children in several other states have also embraced LEAP, including Alabama and California, where the California Reading and Literature Project is implementing LEAP in 125 classrooms.

So as Head Start reauthorization moves forward, the goal should be for each at-risk child to enter kindergarten, prepare to read and to learn. Through data, LEAP has been modified and approved. It is proven effective. It is replicable. It could be replicated across the country. It could form a valuable key to opening the door to a quality preschool experience for our nation's children.

This concludes my remarks. I appreciate the opportunity to be here, and I will be glad to respond to questions.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF NELL R. CARVELL, DIRECTOR, THE LANGUAGE ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES PROGRAM AND HEAD START INITIATIVES, SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY – SEE APPENDIX H

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Ms. Carvell. We appreciate your testimony, and we will get to the questions in a minute.

Mr. Herndon.

STATEMENT OF RON HERNDON, CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL HEAD START ASSOCIATION AND DIRECTOR, ALBINA HEAD START PROGRAM, PORTLAND, OREGON

Mr. Herndon. Thank you, Dwayne. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Woolsey, and indeed, the entire subcommittee and the entire Congress for the longstanding and bipartisan commitment you have made to Head Start. For nearly 40 years, Members of Congress and administration officials have worked side-by-side with the historic community to make important improvements to meet the challenges facing the program. We fully expect that this reauthorization will involve the same considered review that has been the hallmark of past reauthorizations. We are confident that an objective assessment of Head Start will conclude what we ourselves have determined, that Head Start provides real and meaningful benefits sustained over time to our nation's neediest children and families, and that we can always do better. We are proud of what Head Start stands for today. At the same time, we know we continually will face challenges related to insuring quality and the provision of comprehensive services, expanding the program to meet the needs of changing families, and coordinating and collaborating with the growing network of early childhood programs.

I will use the balance of my time to briefly address issues I have been asked to focus on, including the success of the Head Start Program, ways in which the program can be improved, and recommendations for the future of Head Start.

First, I will discuss the success of Head Start. Head Start stands out as one of the most researched, evaluated, and monitored government programs. It is fair to say that the now voluminous body of evidence concludes that Head Start is successful in achieving this primary mission, which is to prepare young children who live in poverty for school. The findings indicate that Head Start graduates not only are ready for learning when they begin school, but they continue to achieve while in school. Indeed, the government's own reports and studies, including the most recent FACES and the most recent HHS Head Start monitoring report, have found that Head Start programs provide high quality, comprehensive services to children and families they serve. We believe this is rooted in the program's design, which recognizes that at-risk children need comprehensive services in order to become school-ready. The program offers an array of services, with a strong emphasis on reading skills, mental and physical health screenings, immunizations, and nutritious meals.

Although Head Start is generally thought of as a program that primarily serves children, it actually is a program that serves families. This success also is rooted in the willingness of the Head Start community to conduct the critical assessments of the program that have led to the

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important quality enhancements made over the course of the last decade.

There are ways in which the program can be improved. Despite the impressive accomplishments of Head Start, NHSA and the entire Head Start community are the first to say that we can do an even better job on behalf of children and families. In fact, throughout its history, Head Start has embraced change and has never shied away from the kind of critical assessments that have sparked the innovative and quality improvements that are central to the success of the program. That is why, in the context of this reauthorization, we are making several specific recommendations we believe will help increase the quality of the services provided by Head Start to the nation's at-risk children.

We agree with those who have suggested that we need better-trained teachers in Head Start classrooms. At the same time, we recognize this really is a resource issue. How can we attract and retain highly-trained qualified teachers, when we cannot pay the salaries these teachers deserve? Rather than just throw up our hands and say it cannot be done, we look forward to working with interested Members of Congress to design innovative solutions that will help us enhance teacher qualifications.

The Head Start community also recognizes that we should always strengthen collaboration and coordination with other programs serving the same population at the state and local level. Just let me say here, it is a myth when people tell you that Head Start does not collaborate. We probably have over 60 collaborative agreements in my home town, from everything from the Portland Trail Blazers, to Nike, to the county, to the city, and to the down-by-the-riverside missionary Baptist church.

Finally, we come back to the issue of resources. The simplest and surest way for Congress to improve the quality of the Head Start Program is to provide adequate funding so that Head Start can continue to meet its important goals.

This brings me to my final point, the future of Head Start. Let me be clear. NHSA shares the goals of the administration and others to enhance the literacy and language components of Head Start, and to improve the coordination of Head Start with state preschool and child care programs. At the same time, it is our position that these goals can be met within the structure of the current program.

I have to say that we remain puzzled as to why the administration is resurrecting recommendations that have been soundly rejected in the past, namely, shifting Head Start to states, and moving the program out of HHS to the Department of Education. We must also ask why the administration is recommending such a radical and risky scheme now, particularly when HHS is in the midst of a major review of Head Start, as mandated by Congress during the 1998 reauthorization. Apparently, the administration has decided it does not need the data from this major, multi-year impact study now underway to know whether or not Head Start works.

Instead, based upon what we believe is anecdotal evidence and a few hunches, the administration has decided Head Start does not work and should be dismantled. We have strong evidence that Head Start is working, and as we await findings from the impact study authorized by

Congress, we have to ask, ''Why make such dramatic changes now?" We respectfully suggest that Congress reject the administration's scheme, and instead work to provide resources that will enable Head Start to enhance teacher qualifications and serve more eligible children. That is the end of my prepared remarks.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF RON HERNDON, CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL HEAD START ASSOCIATION AND DIRECTOR, ALBINA HEAD START PROGRAM, PORTLAND, OREGON – SEE APPENDIX I

Chairman Castle. Thank you very much, Mr. Herndon. Mr. Crompton.

STATEMENT OF DWAYNE A. CROMPTON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, KCMC CHILD DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

Mr. Crompton. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, vice-chairman, and members of the committee. I am Dwayne Crompton, executive director of KCMC Child Development Corporation in Kansas City, Missouri. We serve almost 3700 children in about 15 counties in Missouri. We administer Head Start, Early Head Start, and the Child/Adult Care Food Program.

From my 25 years in operating Head Start, I can unequivocally say that Head Start works. I would like to quote from Secretary Tommy Thompson's report that was submitted to the Chairman, Committee on Education, saying that 85 percent of the programs were found to provide quality services to children and their families. Any non-compliance findings were not serious in nature and corrected within 90 days. It would suggest to me that Head Start is not broken. We should not destroy this program by devolving it to states, throwing out its performance standards and gunning its commitment to comprehensive services. Instead, we should improve Head Start and Early Head Start. We should make sure that every poor child in America has access to the excellent benefits that Head Start offers.

Head Start has had a history of collaborations, and at KCMC, we have collaborations with an impressive array of organizations from all segments of the community, ranging from the local mental health centers to the Department of Transportation. We have Head Start classrooms in five of our local schools, and direct partnerships with more than 15 school districts. With community support, we developed two innovative programs that bring Head Start and other childcare providers together to provide quality, full-day, year-round services for children from working families. In this partnership, we are leveraging Head Start dollars with United Way, with the City of Kansas City, with the State of Missouri, and with the philanthropic and private community.

Despite our successes with collaborations, we are not able to partner with many organizations that we ought to. The barriers to such collaborations do not come from Head Start. They originate in the under-funding of the potential partners or state-imposed regulations.

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Let me just cite for you a few examples from my home state. We have a small state-funded preschool program, but these services do not go far enough to meet the needs of all eligible children. In Missouri, income eligibility for childcare subsidy is one of the lowest in the country – 17,000 dollars for a family of three. Just last week, the Missouri General Assembly Appropriations Committee voted to completely eliminate the Children's Health Insurance Program, jeopardizing the welfare of 77,000 children.

Kansas City's Head Start also has made commendable strides in achieving quality outcomes for children. A recent study conducted by Dr. Kathy Thornberg of the University of Missouri, in conjunction with the Kauffman Foundation, found that 85 percent of our Head Start graduates exceeded kindergarten teacher expectations for incoming kindergarten pupils. Such an outcome would have been impossible without qualified and motivated teachers.

In my program, 49 percent of our teachers have a BA or BS degree, 38 percent have Associate's degrees, and one has a Master's degree. Overall, 90 percent of my teachers meet or exceed the Congressional Professional Development requirement mandate.

Qualified teachers are central to the successful outcomes for Head Start children and for program performance accountability. Congress must continue to mandate quality teaching and provide resources so that we can not only have the best, but that we also can retain the best. We believe our emphasis on early literacy also contributes to successful outcomes for Head Start graduates. We have a comprehensive literacy plan consisting of professional development, teacher training, resources and materials and experiences and activities that support parental involvement.

Now I want to emphasize a very key point. Comprehensive services are the heart and soul of Head Start. Comprehensive services make it possible for us to reach out to America's poorest children and bring positive change to their lives and their families.

Head Start families live in very difficult and challenging circumstances. In our program in Kansas City, 31 percent of our Head Start parents have less than a high school diploma, 54 percent of our parents earn less than $15,000, 33 are under-employed, and 77 percent of our children are from single-parent homes. Clearly, the needs of poor families are complex. We must avoid a one-size-fits-all solution. That is why Head Start is housed in the Department of Health and Human Services.

I also feel that the Head Start Program should and must be held accountable. Already we are monitored every three years by a federal review team to insure that the quality of our programs meet the Head Start standards. We also have the Head Start Outcomes Framework, where we have developed and established bench marks, indicators, and ways in which to measure the performance of our kids. Any new assessment proposal for accountability not be created unless there is a deliberate and public process that brings early childhood experts and others to the table to discuss how our children should be assessed.

As state budgets are cut and services are scaled back, we need Head Start now more than ever before as a stabilizing early childhood force in poor and urban rural communities. Let this reauthorization be an opportunity to once again affirm the success of this national treasure, and to

expand the programs benefit to every poor child and family across America. Thank you.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DWAYNE A. CROMPTON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, KCMC CHILD DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI – SEE APPENDIX J

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Mr. Crompton. Let me thank all the witnesses, and we will go to questions. I will yield five minutes to myself.

I do not want to get into an argument, but Mr. Herndon, you did make the statement – I think I wrote it down correctly – "The administration has decided Head Start does not work and should be dismantled." I totally disagree with that. I have talked to many people in the administration who are extraordinarily supportive of Head Start. I understand that you disagree with some of the changes being proposed. For that reason, you may reach that conclusion. I want to make sure that it is nothing that anybody I know of, either here at this committee or the administration, stated. It is a pretty unified concept that Head Start is both needed and works extremely well.

Mr. Herndon. Excuse me, Congressman. Would you like me to amplify?

Chairman Castle. No.

Mr. Herndon. Okay.

Chairman Castle. I will get to you, though, with other questions, then you can respond to it. I am not cutting you off. I just want to go in a little bit of an order here. Let me go to Ms. Carvell first.

You suggested that the program which you have, which obviously, I do not know much about, is going beyond the par in terms of preparing kids for school. You said it was replicable. Is it replicable, or are there aspects of that program, either in terms of finances or personnel, that make it not quite as replicable all over the country in all the Head Start programs that concern many people here? Could it simply be done with the necessary funding which comes from the Federal Government or state governments now?

Ms. Carvell. We have sites in about six states right now that are using this program. It has been replicated successfully. It is very inexpensive. The cost of it, I think, is in the written document.

For me, the key is teacher training, and we do have a lot of teacher training with the program. We have worked with many teachers who only have a CDA, and we also work with teachers with Bachelor's degrees.

So yes, it is replicable. It does not seem to make a difference the degree that the teacher has.

Chairman Castle. I will have to read a little more about it and learn more about it. I have gotten very, very involved with education research, and I worry about things being able to be replicated

and used in other places. It is nice to have these programs that work, but they are not of a lot of advantage to the committee unless we can make sure that they can work all over. That is very important.

Ms. Carvell. We had a trial in 1990. We had a grant to try it in four sites in the state before we replicated it anyplace else, and it was highly successful.

Chairman Castle. All right, Mr. Herndon. Get ready. This is your moment. Obviously, you can comment on the first statement that I made. But I am a little bit concerned about one of the items that I think was in your written testimony. I do not know if you testified to it or not. It is that the National Head Start Association is advocating for an increase in the eligibility standards at a higher income level, I believe is the way it is stated. My understanding is, and I have heard it from witnesses today, that there is not enough slots now to accommodate the children who are in need, with the funding issues. In fact, Mr. Crompton, I think, mentioned that in his state, they are pulling away some of the funding. A lot of the states are doing that. I am reading about day care not being funded, Head Start – type state programs not being funded at this point. So I am concerned about that as well.

The question becomes, is this something that we can really do at this point, or should we concentrate on serving that population which we all agree has the greatest need and making sure they are accommodated? If we can get to expansion at some point with a better economic recovery, should we do it that way? If you want to comment on the first thing I stated, proceed, but as I said, I do not want to pick an argument. I just wanted to make that point, and then you can comment on the other.

Mr. Herndon. Well, let me do it in reverse order, Congressman. We think it really depends upon how Congress feels about the commitment that it has made to low-income communities and to Head Start, particularly. In 1990, Congress said that it would provide funds that would allow Head Start to serve all eligible children by 1994. That is a promise that Congress made that it has not kept. We feel that when you look at the success of Head Start in working with low-income children, in many ways, it is almost as if you found a Salk vaccine for polio. The question is, do people want the Salk vaccine to cover 50 percent of the children, or 30 percent of the children? Do you want to invest in a Salk vaccine, or do you want to invest in iron lungs, crutches, and hospital beds? It really is a political decision about what the country wants to do.

Chairman Castle. Not to cut you off, but you would agree with me that the most important population we need to serve is the lowest income population.

Mr. Herndon. No, sir, I would not. Income guidelines that frequently are used to define poverty in this country are too low. Head Start programs frequently have to turn away mothers who qualify for WIC. We are forced to tell them, "You make too much money to get into Head Start."

Chairman Castle. We are going to argue now.

Mr. Herndon. Uh-oh.

Chairman Castle. I am not trying to put words in your mouth. But you are basically suggesting that there are greater needs in the higher-income population than there is in the lower-income population.

Mr. Herndon. I do not think that you understood me.

Chairman Castle. I think what you are really saying is that the population that needs to be served is still very low-income; is that correct?

Mr. Herndon. I am saying that we have come up with an artificial definition of low-income. It really does not describe what poverty looks like in this country. It should be expanded, because there are several families who make enough to qualify for WIC. It is inconceivable to me that a policy-maker could say that a mother qualifies for WIC, but she cannot get into Head Start because she makes too much money. We have artificially reduced what poverty looks like in this country.

Chairman Castle. We are not agreeing, but I think we understand each other, at least. You did not respond to the other point. Mr. Crompton wants to make a point, and then we are going to go on to Ms. Woolsey.

Mr. Herndon. The other point is about the Head Start being dismantled. I think that it has already begun to occur. If you take a look at the training program that Head Start has had for years, Head Start has had contracts with organizations that provide training to make sure the programs can retain quality and can address national concerns. That system has been and is in the process of being dismantled. Training programs at this time, Congressman, while we sit here, these training programs have been told they cannot come to state association meetings. They can't come to regional association meetings and provide training right now. That training program, federal officers are being told right now they cannot come to state association meetings or regional association meetings and give updates on Head Start or provide training. The most cost-effective way to do it is being dismantled. There is nothing in the proposal from the administration that says the quality and the performance standards would have to be a part of what states do.

Right now, and even when states had money, there were only three states that said that their preschool programs would have to meet federal performance standards. Yours was one of them. The were Delaware, Washington, and Oregon.

Chairman Castle. Right. Now we are arguing, which I was trying to avoid. But that is a long stretch to take that portion that is your concern and make the statement that the administration is trying to dismantle Head Start.

Mr. Herndon. I believe that, sir. We disagree.

Chairman Castle. We totally disagree on that. Then let us go to Mr. Crompton. I am sorry, but I could not disagree with you more. Let us go to Mr. Crompton.

Mr. Crompton. I just wanted to address briefly the issue on the eligibility criteria, based upon just a little different factor. We have families who come in who are eligible for Head Start, and based

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upon TANF and families having to go to work, we have many mothers who immediately transition because of the requirement to work. We have mothers who will make a dollar more than what is required, and who are no longer eligible for Head Start.

All we want to do is to provide a continuum, to continue to support those families so that they have an opportunity to be successful. What we can document for you is that many of those families end up not taking the promotion, not taking the raise, and recycling through the program. I do not think that is the intent of the TANF program nor the administration, not to have families be successful and have productive careers.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Mr. Crompton. Ms. Woolsey?

Ms. Woolsey. Maybe we can have more than one round of questions. There's just so much on my mind right now.

I don't know if you know it, but I was a welfare mom 35 years ago. And I used to turn down my raises at work because it would just come out of my welfare. I didn't really turn down, but I got nothing from them.

And it's much different to be poor in Kansas City, Missouri, than it is to be in Petaluma, California, or Marin County, California, that I represent, one of the most affluent districts in the country. I mean, you are poor, because you can't afford to live there. And so we've got to look at that, and I agree with you totally. Both of you.

Okay. Mr. Crompton, you've had such, you both have. And Ms. Carvell, you've been wonderful, so – I only have such a short time. You've been successful with collaboration and coordination within your programs within your communities. So what I'd like to know is what do we need to do or what would you need to do to be able to expand your Head Start programs using these efforts, and what do other communities need to do so that – and what do we need to do in reauthorizing Head Start to make it so that it works with collaboration.

And one of the controversies is do you collaborate or not? Well, obviously, you do. So talk to us some more about that.

Mr. Crompton. Well, let me just again suggest through their own findings that the Federal Government has demonstrated evidence that collaboration is taking place in Head Start throughout this country, not just in Kansas City. But we have had an opportunity to have some fantastic collaborations to help us expand and improve our Head Start Program. One of the most recent ones, which Senator Bond helped us with, is our new Metro Link Head Start facility. It was built with the federal transportation funds, city funds, and private and philanthropic funds, to create a Head Start site that takes care of two of the major issues around working mothers: transportation and quality early education and care. This center opened recently and is full, and it is having a tremendous amount of success.

I also want to address the issue around public schools. We work hand-in-hand with the public schools. As a grantee, we also fund two major school districts' Head Start programming.

We are partnering, and we are creating these relationships. I guess what is troublesome to me is that it is implied that we are not working with school districts, and that we are not working with state programs. In our state, we are collaborating on how to have effective preschool and pre-K programs. I would say to you that Head Start has taken the lead in the state with developing those quality initiatives.

Ms. Woolsey. So Mr. Herndon, I'd like you to respond to that, too. But is there anything we should be doing that would make it easier to collaborate? I mean, would the President's proposal make it easier?

Mr. Herndon. No, ma'am. No, ma'am. Again, I firmly believe that when you ask about reauthorization and what should be done, I wanted to make sure that Head Start remains in Health and Human Services. One, that it remains a federal program to local communities, rather than go through the states.

When the states were a little bit better funded, and when the economy was better, they started preschool programs. The gentleman from Connecticut, his state-funded program is called Head Start Like. I said, ``Do you mean l-i-t-e or l-i-k-e?" They do not require Head Start performance standards as a quality control component. They do not.

As I was saying earlier, there are only three states that have adopted performance standards. The others have not. So the commitment to quality is one of the reasons that Head Start has been so successful, and it is comprehensive.

So Congresswoman, one, we need to make sure that we stay with Health and Human Services. Two, if people want to expand the number of children that are served and say that all Head Start programs can serve children birth through five, and not to have to write a special grant to Early Head Start, if your needs assessment says there is a need to serve children birth through three, that you can serve them.

Also, I will discuss the income guidelines. This is extraordinarily important, because I can't play Solomon and say that a family who makes $2,000 more than the income limit needs less than a family who meets the income level. I do not think any of us are that smart or that bright. The income guidelines have to be expanded so the programs have more flexibility to meet the needs of the working poor.

Mr. Crompton. Madam, may I also say to you that many of the issues around collaboration really rest with the state and current regulations and programs that are under-funded. One of our major experiences has been while Head Start has continued to grow; some of our partners have not received additional resources. They have been placed on hold.

Ms. Woolsey. Well, for example, give us an example of a partner.

Mr. Crompton. Well, I could even take the Child Care Subsidy Program, wherein the State of Missouri, the subsidies have not increased over the last five, six years. While our cost increase and Head Start's increases come along, the state has remained stagnant. Someone has to fill that gap. It

makes it almost impossible for many programs to partner when you have programs that are underfunded and do not receive increases. That does not allow you to maintain a quality program.

Also, there are the regulations the states govern. That is some of the fear I have in moving it to the state—in order to do it, the state would weaken it. When you are talking about flexibility, it scares me. Flexibility, to me, means that you're going to weaken it so that you can do more. And that is really frightening, and that is what I think would happen. Most states do not have the kind of early childhood standards as does Head Start.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Ms. Woolsey.

Mr. Wilson.

Mr. Wilson. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate you being here today. I regret that we had a vote, and the confusion. With Dr. Horn and Governor Rowland, this has been a very interesting discussion. I particularly have an interest in the district I represent. It is similar, actually, to Connecticut in that I have very wealthy communities, but I also have pockets of very disadvantaged persons. I am particularly familiar with it, because my wife is an alternative school teacher and works with children. It just tears your heart out, but they keep on working hard, and progress is being made.

Head Start has an excellent reputation in our state and South Carolina. A couple of questions I have are that it is my understanding that there is a plan underway to assess the school readiness of all four-year-olds in Head Start. A concern I have, is that the four-year-olds are too young. All three of you can answer this. Are there other ways to insure that the programs are working and can be held accountable?

Ms. Carvell. I think that when you consider assessment, it is an emotional issue. The reality is most assessment around four-year-olds is like a game. It is a game. They point to things. They listen to a story and tell it back to you. It is checking to see where they are when they come in and what have they learned during the year.

Much of assessment is a checklist, so there is still portfolio assessment. There are a lot of ways to go on.

Mr. Wilson. Thank you.

Mr. Herndon. Congressman, currently, every Head Start program in this country already assesses children several times a year. Most of the researchers that I am aware of who have devoted their lives to psychometrics will tell you with a national test that they are trying to create, that they doubt the validity of that instrument. Certainly, the administration plans to have all Head Start four-year-olds tested in September, or this coming fall. The folks I have talked to said you have to pilot something like that for years before you ever figure out if it is valid.

I will conclude on this comment. I have friends in one city, which will remain unnamed, where this is being piloted. One of the questions on the test involves showing the children, these

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four-year-olds, different trucks, and they ask the child which one is a camper. Somebody smarter than me would have to explain to me the significance of a camper. Especially when we have children who live in certain places where they have never seen a camper in their lives. You are trying to suggest to me that if I answer it incorrectly, that it means there is something wrong with that child or the program or the teacher that did not teach the child what a camper is?

So we have very strong objections to the test that is being created. What happens to children who don't speak English? Head Start serves children all over this country. Is it to suggest that one test is will be able to tell you something significant about either the child, the program, or the teacher, when in fact, most of the differences in performance that we find at Head Start are from classroom-to-classroom, not program-to-program? We think it is a waste of money, and that time and resources are indeed precious.

Mr. Crompton. Mr. Congressman, I guess my major concern is that there are experts who do assessments around early education and care. It appears that there has not been a roundtable discussion, a pooling of the experts who understand child assessments to help in the development of this process. I think the elimination of having a public discourse, just based upon what Mr. Herndon is saying, about the cultural, ethnic, community, and geographic differences that exist, to not have a roundtable of a group of experts who understand assessment come together to make specific recommendations does a disservice not only to Head Start, but to children in general.

Mr. Wilson. Well, I think you are all very clear as to where you are coming from. I do not mean to incite you on the next question.

But anyway, an important aspect of Head Start is parental involvement, with parents as the first and primary educator. I do like the concept as expressed by Governor Rowland of the state option. Indeed, in the county I represented in the State Senate, where I was on the Education Committee 17 years, we have great differences between rural and urban/suburban communities. Now in the congressional district I represent, it is just so extraordinary that indeed, one size does not fit all does not even come remotely within the same county.

So I want to know what you think about the President's plans as to how it involves parents, and whether the state option would be favorable or not, or whether it needs to be changed or not.

Mr. Herndon. I do not think that the state option has been well thought out, and for this reason. A careful examination of Head Start teaches us that certain things are responsible for its success. One, you have national quality performance standards, but local communities have the option of how they go about meeting them.

The state option does not require national performance standards at all. In my state, Oregon, the liberal Democratic governor two years ago began to try to influence the regional office to cut back on the amount of Head Start dollars per child, which would have limited the quality of the Head Start Program. Now, our state just cut $2 million of the state funding for Head Start. I have a fairly good idea what is going to happen if our state received those dollars. If they try to cut back on quality in good times, I can just about imagine what is going to happen now if that money is given to the state. Our state is, as a friend of mine says, broke as the Ten Commandments.

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When they get that money, I know what they are going to do with it, and it is not about quality.

So there are no quality assurances. There certainly is not a provision for parent involvement. In Head Start, parent involvement does not just mean selling pepperoni or showing up for Valentine's Day. They make decisions about funding. They make decisions about hiring. They make decisions about termination. I have not seen one state preschool program in this country that said, ''We are going to allow low-income parents make decisions about who gets hired, who gets terminated, and the budget and the curriculum in the program." That is parent involvement at Head Start, and that is why we have 800,000 parents who volunteered last year. You cannot find that in state preschools.

Mr. Crompton. Mr. Congressman, may I just twist that question? One of the concerns I have, is have we done a careful examination of state pre-K programs? I think that needs to occur. I think that when we see the landscape across this country, what we will find is poor quality programs, lack of adequate funding, many programs where there is no credentialing for teachers. In fact, in childcare programs in the State of Missouri, to be a teacher, you need to be 18, free of tuberculosis, and breathing.

I do not think that is what we are talking about as we intend to talk about successful children, moving them to succeed and be ready in school, not reducing the standards. I do think that the question of a careful examination of current pre-K programs in this state would be due diligence on the part of this committee.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Mr. Wilson.

Ms. Davis.

Mr. Wilson. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mrs. Davis. Thank you. Thank you for being here. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sorry that I wasn't able to return for the rest of the discussion earlier. And a lot of my questions were to try and get some clarification for what is being proposed, but perhaps I could flip that around.

This follows on some of the other questions. Is there anything that you're precluded from doing that you find ''We're not allowed to do this. We're restricted one way or another"? Now, I understand you can't serve all the children that you would like to serve. But is there anything specific that you're actually precluded from doing?

Mr. Herndon. Yes, ma'am. This comes back to serving eligible children, given the current income guidelines. There is a tremendous need for Head Start services for children birth through three. The only way that a Head Start program can serve those children now, is to compete nationally for a special grant in Early Head Start, which is really a waste of time.

All of you should simply say that all Head Start programs can serve children birth through five, and the only thing you would have to show is a needs assessment in your local community that says there is a need for it. These children are not being served now. Then we could begin to

serve this population in which it is necessary. It is bad enough for children three through five, but for families with children birth through three, it's almost impossible to get any quality care.

I have to keep saying ``quality," because we think that is what makes Head Start a little bit different. So yes, ma'am. If that were done during this reauthorization, it would help many, many Head Start programs and communities.

Mrs. Davis. Do you have any sense, though – I mean, there are thousands of children who are three to five who aren't being served already. I mean, we're hearing many children fall through the cracks. And maybe you can kind of clarify from your perspective.

Mr. Herndon. Sure.

Mrs. Davis. Who are those children who fall through the cracks? Are they children that are just not being reached culturally, geographically? Who are those kids? I guess what I'm concerned about is if we start focusing on birth to three, then are we talking about such an expansion of a program? Because we could certainly find children throughout the country who would fall into that category.

Mr. Herndon. No, ma'am. In certain cities in certain states, the state has gone into the preschool business. They have attracted four-year-olds.

Mrs. Davis. Pre-K, yeah.

Mr. Herndon. Absolutely. If I had the flexibility to begin to serve this other population, then I would not have these vacancies in my program, and this area of tremendous need could be addressed.

Mrs. Davis. Any idea cost-wise what we're looking at in that area?

Mr. Herndon. Well, obviously, services to children birth through three, they are more expensive. You only have eight children in a classroom, compared to 20 with three to five. But I think with the cost, my dollars are going to be the same. If you give the same dollars to me in Portland, Oregon, and if I said to you well, the school districts and some other non-profits, they are picking up most of the four-year-olds. There is a tremendous need for birth through three, I could take those same dollars and serve that population, along with the dollars that I am getting from childcare, which we do, and that I am getting from city, which we do, along with dollars that we are getting from the state. So we would be able to use those collaborative agreements and arrangements to address this population, because the four-year-olds are already being served.

Mr. Crompton. Let me suggest how important are the community needs assessments. We spend thousands of dollars conducting these needs assessments, and then we are not really utilizing them or we are not able to follow what the assessment says. The assessment, it may indicate that in our

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community, zero to three is the area where we need to be serving, and that is where the need exists. It may say zero to five. It may talk about how we do rural and urban.

Over the course of the years, it has always kind of been that we have had these needs assessments and not always had the opportunity to do what they have directed to meet the needs of the community about supporting the children.

Mrs. Davis. Now, perhaps some of my colleagues might think, then, that the administration's proposal would incorporate that in the thinking in some way. And I just want to be sure that we're clear here of at least what your concerns are.

Mr. Herndon. No, ma'am. I do not think so. Because most states do not put very much money into serving children birth through three for the reason you just mentioned. They will put a little bit of money for childcare. But because it is more expensive, you will find very few preschool programs that serve children birth through three. I do not think so. States are not putting money in that end of it.

Mrs. Davis. With my remaining time, Mr. Chairman, I would like to say that we ought to pay our preschool educators what we pay our university professors, because in fact, they're the ones that actually shape the learning that's going to take place for the future. We may not be able to do that. But I think that in the Head Start Program, at least they have to pay 2 percent, basically, across the board.

Mr. Crompton. Well, there are funds that actually go to what we call quality improvement, and part of that is around compensation and benefits. One of the critical pieces – and that is why I guess I am somewhat perturbed around the matter of what is broken. The current legislation allows for you to move teachers, to provide professional development and training, to achieve the AA degree and above, release time and support, while paralleling compensation so that you are striving to meet what the districts in your community would pay a teacher of like training.

That is intact. That is in place. We do not need to lose that. We need to keep that quality improvement funds intact that continue to support that kind of professional development that will have the kind of positive outcomes that we are talking about for children.

Mrs. Davis. So is there a difference, then, in the two? I had the understanding that perhaps what they were establishing was a ceiling, as opposed to a floor, with the amount of dollars that would be going towards training, towards compensation, et cetera. Is that not the case?

Mr. Herndon. I think it is, from what I understand. They have already talked about putting less money into technical assistance, and training technical assistants. From what I understand, they are proposing taking, about $70 million that are currently appropriated for training technical assistants, and use that for other parts of this plan.

Again, technical assistance is a key part of retaining quality in Head Start. As I said earlier, steps have already been taken that have weakened technical assistance in Head Start which show us that when people ask, ``Are they dismantling it,'' it is already occurring. Now we cannot get the access that is necessary. For me, in my program in Portland, Oregon, ma'am, the only way I can get technical assistance is if I am a deficient grantee. I have to be broke before the technical assistants can come in and help my program, and/or that they are addressing some of the President's initiatives.

Well, the President's initiative does not talk about mental health. It does not talk about housing. It does not talk about comprehensive services for children. So if I want help in any of those areas, I cannot get it, because the administration has already told them, ``You cannot go into that cat's program unless he is a deficient grantee.'' That is my opinion. That is a misuse of what the technical assistance program is supposed to be for Head Start.

Mr. Crompton. Let me just say that it is difficult, at times, to understand the direction. A percent of that 2 percent, which would be a reduction in current funding, would go to states to allow them to write their plans regarding how they would administer Head Start. There is a direct impact to carry me if my state decided to do that. Well, we are going to lose some of that training money, because the state is going to get 1 percent. That is right off the top.

. In terms of the quality, that is yet to be determined in terms of how it is written. It is still vague. I guess we want to insure, or at least have the opportunity, to insure that the quality funds stay and remain available to support the quality work of Head Start.

Mrs. Davis. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Ms. Davis.

Ms. Majette.

Ms. Majette. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you all for being here this afternoon. I represent Georgia's 4th District, which some people call suburban Atlanta. It is Decatur and east of the city of Atlanta.

Fortunately for those of us in Georgia, we have a very strong pre-K program and an early education program. But I'm concerned. I share your concerns, Mr. Herndon, regarding the ability of individual states to pick up the ball and run with it if we do not continue to proceed with Head Start and the standards that have been set.

According to the information I have, research from the Children's Defense Fund, if you compare what some states' preschool requirements are versus Head Start, it's clear to me that the administration's plan and proposal really lowers the bar. And obviously, lowering the bar in a situation where we are already not able to meet the needs of so many children, for me, is unacceptable.

But if you look at this information, there are at least five states that have pre-K programs that have a lower teacher credential requirement than Head Start. Sixteen states have pre-K programs that have no class size requirements. Twelve states have pre-K programs requiring less in-service training than Head Start level. Ten states have pre-K programs that have no child/staff ratio requirements. Twenty-one states have pre-K programs that require less monitoring than Head Start provides. Fourteen states have pre-K programs that do not have any comprehensive service requirements. And only three states require as much as a Head Start level. Ten states only require pre-K programs that have standards for health and safety codes. And I guess the list goes on and on.

And so I share your concern, and I would really like – I guess my question would be, given the fact that this is even being proposed, is there a way that you see that we can get the states in line with what they would need to do if Head Start does not continue to operate in the manner that we know has already been successful?

Mr. Herndon. No, ma'am, I do not think so. I think that is the reason that most people talk about sending programs to the states. They accept the argument that states know better how to do this, and they should have the flexibility to address state problems.

No state has come up with a program that has come close to matching Head Start in terms of quality. They have, I am sure, their various reasons, funding and a lot of other reasons, why they have not. Again, it gets back to the central question if it is not broke, why fix it? You have the premiere program working in early childhood education in this country. Why this rush to send it to states?

The research is already in. Ed Ziegler, one of the founders of Head Start, emeritus professor at Yale, did research on this at least three years ago. He looked at preschool programs and compared them to Head Start. He came up with the exact same conclusion. They do not match Head Start in terms of quality.

So it is kind of baffling to us, when we hear the administration talk about research-based decisions, the research has already been done. Head Start is far higher quality, far more comprehensive, and it has national performance standards, and the one part that you alluded to, monitoring.

We run a full-day program in Oregon. The only time I saw anybody from the state show up was a day care certifier who came by once a year to make sure we had the fire hydrants in place, the garbage was in the right spot, and we did not have a hundred kids in a closet. Other than that, there was no state monitoring.

When people make these claims that somehow, the states are going to be able to replicate Head Start quality, where is the beef? They have not done it up to this point in time.

Ms. Majette. Thank you. Do I have time for one additional question?

Chairman Castle. Sure. We will allow you one additional question.

Ms. Majette. And this goes back to the previous panel that was here. My concern, well, I have several. But certainly, I have a concern that parents are not being involved in a way that really does make a difference in the education of their children. I know you alluded to that, the component of parental involvement with respect to Head Start. And I just wondered, can you tell me at all what your perspective is on the Even Start Program, and is there some way that we can strengthen Head Start to help educate parents so that they can be more involved in the education of their children?

Mr. Herndon. A major part of what we do is to work with parents to help them not only become stronger with their children, but how to become advocates for their children when they leave us and they go into public schools. We introduce parents, saying, ``Here is the principal,'' of the school that your child is going to be going into. ``Here is the teacher. Here is the curriculum.''

I think that where Even Start is available, Head Start programs are already working with it, and you will frequently find that siblings of children in Head Start are also involved in Even Start, and we certainly do want to strengthen those ties.

Now, we agree with you that every effort that can be made to strengthen parent involvement should be made. Again, I do not see that as a part of this initiative. I do not see anyone saying that when this money goes to the states, if it would occur, that we are going to allow Head Start parents to make decisions about how this money gets spent, who is going to get hired, what the curriculum is going to be, where the centers are going to be placed. Those are some of the essential parts of parental involvement in Head Start.

Again, Congresswoman, states have had an opportunity when they had money to make parental involvement a significant part of their preschool programs. They have not done it. Is someone going to suggest to me now that they do not have money, and if you send Head Start to the states, that all of a sudden, the states are going to see the light and have all this parental involvement with these billions of dollars? I do not think so.

Let me just say this in conclusion. I have a friend of mine, a Hispanic friend of mine. He said, ``Ron, this seems rather strange at a point when Hispanics have become the largest minority in the country. If you look at the Head Start Hispanic population, and the black population, you are looking at maybe 60-plus percent of the children in Head Start.'' He said, ``Does not that seem strange that now all of a sudden, these funds are going to go back to the same states that these populations have had a difficult time getting services from for the last several years at this critical point when their communities are being devastated by unemployment? The one program that parents did have some control over and have exercised wonderful stewardship in now will be taken out of their influence.''

That is the question that others will have to wrestle with. But the timing does trouble me.

Ms. Majette. I share your concern. Thank you.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, everybody. At this time, we are going to bring the hearing portion of this to a close. I will give Ms. Woolsey an opportunity to make a closing statement. I will make a brief closing statement, and then we will be completed for the day.

But let me thank the witnesses very much for being here, whether we agree or disagree, I thank you very much for being here. We do appreciate your testimony, and we do appreciate, by the way, your written statements. We also appreciate all the guests and others who participated and were able to stay through the day.

With that, let me turn to Ms. Woolsey.

Ms. Woolsey. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, panel. You were wonderful. Ms. Carvell, I wish we had more of you. It's just that you weren't quite so controversial.

But I think we can learn from you and what your LEAP program has done can be and must be incorporated in every early childhood program, if at all possible. I mean, it doesn't have to be called LEAP. But we know those are the standards we're working for.

So quality performance standards, a higher level of eligibility so that the working poor are not left out of what's going on. Full funding. I mean, we can't do any of this unless we're willing to put, you know, open our pocketbooks and put our money where our mouth is.

General flexibility. I heard that, that the flexibility that the President's proposal is maybe that they think they're putting place is what you want right now based on a program that actually has proven itself. So that's where the flexibility needs to be, and based on the needs of the community.

Again, as usual, compensation. Pay those that are involved with the most important commodity in our world, in our country: our children, our babies, our future. Let's pay them what they're worth so that we value our children. And training the educator, training the parents.

That's what we're looking at. And that's what you've been saying. Head Start, for the last 38 years, you came here. I mean, that happened because it became a – this country finally became aware that children who start behind stay behind unless. And Head Start is the answer to ''unless." And now we just need to make it so that your programs can be available for everybody that needs it, not just the limited number that we have right now.

I thank you very much. We'll work together, because we will be reauthorizing Head Start. Thank you.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Ms. Woolsey. Let me just say a couple things here. First, with all due respect to all of us in this room, Members of Congress and you who are running programs, and those who are working in programs, we are really here to see what we can do for these kids, ultimately. I do not mean to be too altruistic in that, but that is really what it is all about. I happen to agree with Ms. Woolsey on this. I think that early developmental stage of these kids is as important as anything that we can do for young people in this country. I believed that when I was

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governor; I believe it now.

I have worked with these programs. I am a strong believer in the Head Start-type programs, because I think it is needed. The Even Starts, the Early, whatever it may be. It is very much needed. I think it is really true. I do not think I am alone in that. I think it is true of everybody in this room, I think it is true of all Members of Congress, too, and I think it is true of the President and others.

But there is some serious division about exactly how we get there, or even, for all that matters, how well all these programs are working. There are a lot of studies on this. You could probably put 20 studies on the scale over here and 20 over there saying something is working or not. My own sense of it is that Head Start programs by and large work well when you have good administrators in states that are caring about it and they work well.

When you have a state that does not pay a lot of attention to early childhood – and I do not think the Federal Government really can ever give it the oversight that is necessary. You have poor providers running it, then I think in that case, it does not work as well as it should. Frankly, I would like to know more about that. I am interested in some sort of assessment program. Not testing, per se, and not whatever some of the flaws are in some of the existing programs. I do not know how long it would take to develop. I am not a child educator or a psychologist. But I do believe that there should be some sort of comparable programs to see what we are really doing with these kids.

I visit many schools. I have been in every public school in my state at one time or another. Most of them, I have been in many times. I have seen those children coming into school in kindergarten and first grade, and I can tell pretty quickly after sitting through an hour's class whether they are probably going to make it or not. Did we really help them enough when they came into our schools?

I am not sure that we are doing all that we should, to be very candid. I am really not. I am not faulting anybody here or anybody in any of the programs out there. I just think we have to do even more. Yes, I agree that money could be an aspect to this.

I have got to tell you it is not just the fact that we had a very articulate and good governor here today. That, to me, is a fairly convincing argument. I do not want to take too much time on this. But in regard to the President's state options plan, somebody said it provides no guarantee of financial services. Yet the plan provided to us by the administration, as it came to us, makes clear that the states would have to develop state standards for preschool, including plans for professional development, and be required to implement an accountability system, both of which would have to be approved at the federal level by the Departments of Health and Human Services and Department of Education.

In addition, states would be required to, at a minimum, maintain current levels of spending for early childhood, continue to serve the same number of eligible children, and maintain all comprehensive social services. If those things are accurate, I think it would answer a lot of the questions. Now, one may doubt whether they are accurate or not, but I think it would answer a lot

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of the questions.

Frankly, I have seen some Head Start programs, even in my state of Delaware, which are not anywhere near as well-run as they should be. That also concerns me. As to the shift from HHS to Education, I am not entering into that fray at this point. But the whole state proposal, I think, is an important issue. The whole business of testing and the assessments is significant. I believe there is sufficient money. In fact, I think not all of the money has been used for training in technical assistance.

I know that there have been literacy training programs that have been boycotted by Head Start providers. I disagree with that. I think it is important that those things take place and come across whatever splits there are. We need to make these programs work. I think you have sensed this. I have not been entirely happy with this hearing this morning and afternoon, because I think it has been more, to some degree, divisive than it has been healing in terms of resolving what the problems are and moving forward.

We basically all know about the funding issue. We know it is not going to change dramatically. We know the states are cutting back. But the question is, how are we going to use these funds? How can we make it work better? How can we replicate good programs? How can we make sure that those standards and assessments in the good programs are being lived up to by everybody? Ultimately, how can we handle the children?

As I said, I think we all in our heart want to do this. It is a question of how we are going to get there. But by God, we are going to have to work at it in order to get there. Hopefully, we can continue to work together.

[Whereupon, at 1:27 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

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APPENDIX A – WRITTEN OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN MICHAEL N. CASTLE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE MICHAEL N. CASTLE
CHAIRMAN
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

Hearing On:
"HEAD START: WORKING TOWARDS IMPROVED RESULTS FOR CHILDREN"
March 6, 2003

Good morning. Thank you for joining us today for this important hearing on the impact of the Head Start program in preparing disadvantaged children for school. This marks the first hearing to help prepare Members of this Committee for reauthorization of Head Start, which is scheduled for this year.

Quality early care and education are critical for children, parents, the business community, and the success of welfare reform. Every day, approximately 12 million children and their families utilize some form of early childhood service. The Head Start program is the centerpiece of the Federal government's efforts to support quality early childhood education for our nation's most disadvantaged youth. Since 1965, the Head Start program has served nearly 20 million low-income children and their families. Today, Head Start serves over 900,000 children every day and has nearly 1,500 grantees across the United States. In my home state of Delaware, Head Start programs serve 1,594 children with state government funding an additional 464 four-year-olds.

Head Start was conceived to offer economically disadvantaged children access to a level of comprehensive educational, health, and social services that meet or exceed similar opportunities available to more affluent children. The goal of the program is to provide disadvantaged students with a solid foundation that will prepare them for success in the public school system and later in life.

While the resources spent have been significant, results have sometimes been mixed. Research shows that children who participate in Head Start are better prepared to enter school than similar children who do not participate in this program. This is evidence that Head Start is working, but I believe we can do better. States report that between 20 percent to nearly half of all children entering school are not prepared to succeed in school, and that the typical Head Start student still enters kindergarten far below the national norm. This achievement gap between typical Head Start students and other students is a challenge we should address, not ignore. Thousands of disadvantaged

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children pass through Head Start every year without receiving the level of academic instruction and school readiness we are capable of providing for them. They enter kindergarten behind their more advantaged peers. If we do not expect more from Head Start, then we are letting them down.

The No Child Left Behind Act emphasizes the importance of academic achievement in reading and math and sets forth a goal that all children become skilled readers by the end of third grade. Recognizing the important relationship between the quality of a child's early experiences and their readiness for school, States and schools are focusing greater attention on the cognitive and social development of young children before they enter kindergarten. Head Start and other early childhood education programs are often the first line of defense in ensuring that children attain the fundamental skills necessary for optimal reading development and overall school readiness.

Last spring, The President announced the Good Start, Grow Smart initiative to improve early childhood education for millions of America's youngest children. As part of our work to improve Head Start, this Committee will consider areas in which Head Start can be strengthened to improve the quality of the Head Start experience so that every Head Start child is prepared to be successful in school. The Good Start, Grow Smart plan identifies the need for teachers to be well trained; the importance of aligning early childhood programs with State K-12 education goals; and the need for better information for parents and caregivers about the best practices in early childhood development.

During reauthorization, this Committee also will consider how Head Start programs may enhance collaboration with other publicly funded early care and education programs. By leveraging resources and establishing consistent program goals, the Head Start program can become a critical component of a coordinated effort to provide high quality early education to young children.

Finally, this Committee will review the success of Head Start in delivering results for children. During the 1998 reauthorization, this Committee made several changes to the law intended to place greater program emphasis on children's development of pre-literacy, language, and numeracy skills. Today, there is little evidence that Head Start children are more prepared for school than five years ago. As a result, we will seek to understand why these changes have not always translated into greater cognitive gains for

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children, and how we can do a better job of ensuring that Head Start programs successfully deliver results.

And, while progress is necessary on the academic front, other non-academic services provided to children participating in Head Start also are important. Strengthening the academic focus of Head Start and preserving comprehensive services such as health and nutrition are important goals for Republicans and Democrats alike. Research makes clear that school readiness involves both academic development and social-emotional—without one or the other a child is less likely to succeed in school. I have grown increasingly frustrated by false media accounts that Republicans wish to transform Head Start into an academic-only program that eliminates the comprehensive services currently provided by Head Start. It is time to stop pitting the various needs of children against one another—they are not competing priorities. To characterize it as such, is insulting and demoralizing to the thousands of staff who sacrifice their time and energy helping these children every day.

Today, we will hear from experts who will help shed light on the Head Start program—its strengths and areas where it can be made stronger. Our witnesses' unique perspectives on Head Start will offer insights that will be tremendously helpful to the Members of this Committee as we work to improve the Head Start program. We look forward to their comments.

With that, I would like to recognize Congresswoman Woolsey who also will make a brief opening statement.

APPENDIX B -- WRITTEN OPENING STATEMENT OF RANKING MINORITY MEMBER LYNN WOOLSEY, SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Rep. Lynn Woolsey
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Education Reform
Opening Statement
March 6, 2003

THANK YOU, MR. CHAIRMAN.

AS YOU KNOW, THIS IS MY FIRST HEARING AS THE RANKING MEMBER ON THE EDUCATION REFORM SUBCOMMITTEE, AND I CAN'T THINK OF ANY BETTER PLACE FOR ME TO START THAN WITH THE HEAD START PROGRAM.

FOR NEARLY FORTY YEARS, THE HEAD START PROGRAM HAS BEEN A SYMBOL OF THIS NATION'S COMMITMENT TO A BETTER LIFE FOR LOW-INCOME CHILDREN.

WE HAVE DOCUMENTED RESEARCH THAT HEAD START IS KEEPING THAT COMMITMENT.

THE RESULTS OF THE MOST RECENT SURVEY CONDUCTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, CALLED "HEAD START FACES", SHOWS THAT HEAD START IS DOING JUST WHAT IT PROMISES – GIVING OUR NATION'S POOREST CHILDREN A HEAD START IN PREPARING THEM FOR SCHOOL.

THE FACES STUDY SHOWS THAT HEAD START:

- NARROWS THE GAP BETWEEN LOW-INCOME CHILDREN AND ALL CHILDREN IN VOCABULARY AND WRITING SKILLS
- IMPROVES SOCIAL SKILLS
- LEADS TO CONTINUED IMPROVEMENTS IN WORD KNOWLEDGE; LETTER RECOGNITION; MATH SKILLS AND WRITING SKILLS RELATIVE TO OTHER CHILDREN DURING THEIR KINDERGARTEN YEAR

IN ADDITION, OTHER RESEARCH SHOWS THAT EARLY HEAD START IS PRODUCING POSITIVE COGNITIVE IMPACTS FOR CHILDREN AT AGE TWO.

DOES THAT MEAN THAT I THINK THAT HEAD START IS PERFECT AND DOESN'T NEED TO MAKE ANY CHANGES? OF COURSE NOT! EVEN THE BEST PROGRAMS CAN BE BETTER.

HEAD START HAS MADE GREAT PROGRESS TOWARDS IMPROVING THE EDUCATION OF ITS TEACHERS, BUT MORE IS NEEDED. HEAD START MUST WORK TO HAVE MORE TEACHERS WITH A BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND WE CAN HELP REACH THAT GOAL BY PROVIDING MORE FUNDS FOR TEACHERS' SALARIES AND CONTINUING EDUCATION.

WE NEED TO STRENGTHEN, NOT WEAKEN, HEAD START'S FOCUS ON COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES. HEAD START HELPS LOW-INCOME CHILDREN GET READY FOR SCHOOL BY PROVIDING HEALTH SERVICES; PARENT TRAINING AND SUPPORT; NUTRITION; AND DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL SKILLS AS WELL AS EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION. IN YOUNG CHILDREN, COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT CANNOT BE SEPARATED FROM PHYSICAL GROWTH AND FAMILY SUPPORT.

WE SHOULD BE MOVING TOWARDS FULL FUNDING OF HEAD START, SO THAT NO CHILD WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR HEAD START IS TURNED AWAYAND, EXPANDING EARLY HEAD START.

AT THE SAME TIME, I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO EXAMINE WAYS THAT WOULD GIVE THOSE COMMUNITIES NOT CURRENTLY FILLING THEIR HEAD START PROGRAMS THE FLEXIBILITY TO ADMIT CHILDREN WITH SLIGHTLY HIGHER INCOMES. THE CURRENT WELFARE PROGRAM HAS MOVED MANY FAMILIES INTO THE RANKS OF THE WORKING POOR, CAUSING THEM TO LOSE ELIGIBILITY FOR HEAD START AT A TIME WHEN THEIR CHILDREN MOST NEED THESE SUPPORT SERVICES.

ALL OF THE CHANGES THAT I AM SUGGESTING BUILD ON THE STRENGTHS OF THE CURRENT HEAD START PROGRAM, STRENGTHS THAT HAVE BEEN BENEFITTING LOW INCOME CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES FOR ALMOST FORTY YEARS. AS WE MOVE FORWARD WITH THIS REAUTHORIZATION, I HOPE WE WILL ALL KEEP IN MIND THAT HEAD START IS WORKING; HEAD START PROGRAMS PRODUCE PROVEN RESULTS; AND THERE IS NO NEED TO BE RE-INVENTING A GOOD EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM. ONE ALREADY EXISTS, AND ITS CALLED HEAD START.

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APPENDIX C – WRITTEN STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE CIRO RODRIGUEZ, SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Education and Workforce Committee Subcommittee on Education Reform
"Head Start: Improving Results for Children"
Thursday, March 6, 2003, 10:00 a.m. in room 2175 Rayburn HOB

Testimony by:
Congressman Ciro D. Rodriguez
M.C. Texas 28
Chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus

Thank you Chairman Mike Castle and Ranking Member Lynn Woosley for the opportunity to submit testimony on an issue of critical concern to many Americans. The adequate care and development of our children is perhaps the greatest hope of every American. For those who lack resources or face social barriers in their pursuit of this necessary goal we offer them a Head Start.

I address you today as a member of Congress representing the 28th District of Texas that relies heavily on the services provided by Head Start. I also speak as the Chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus that represents Hispanic members from twenty districts throughout the United States who have voted unanimously to preserve and enhance a Head Start for our children. Finally, I speak as a father who understands what it means first hand to want and hope the best for our children.

Head Start: A History of Success

Head Start is a highly successful program. Since its founding in 1965, the Head Start program has provided comprehensive child development and family support services to more than 18 million low-income preschool children and their families. Given the broad objectives of the programs, it is difficult to compare its success against other programs with more narrow objectives.

For over three decades, Head Start has grown tremendously -- moving from a $96 million dollar budget to nearly $6.5 billion in fiscal year 2001. Growth, however, has been uneven, with funding often failing to keep up with inflation, let alone provide enough to maintain or improve quality. Head Start currently only reaches 40 percent of children eligible due to lack of funding and only 3 percent of eligible infants and toddlers.

Let me be clear: Head Start is first and foremost a federally funding comprehensive child and family development program designed to meet the needs of low-income families with pre-school children. This is why it must stay in the Department of Health and Human Services.

Children born into families in poverty start at a marked disadvantage to their peers in middle-income and wealthy families. Studies suggest that they do not have the richness of books in the home, proper nutrition, or access to a continuum of health services. Head Start was created to address this spectrum of issues – improving the richness of the early learning experience for not only young children but for their parents as well. In fact, it is

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Head Start's focus on families and fighting poverty in a comprehensive manner that has lead to the program's success in getting children ready for school, improving their literacy and numeracy skills, and giving their parents the skills needed to become their child's first and best teacher.

Administering the program through the Department of Health and Human Services ensures greater collaboration and integration of all the components essential to a child's and family's development. Providing comprehensive education, health, family, and community resources, contribute to children's readiness, especially for low-income children and families. Transferring the program to the Department of Education would undermine this comprehensive approach with no guarantee these essential programmatic components would be preserved.

One of the most recognized and successful components of Head Start is its focus on parental involvement. Moving the program to the Department of Education endangers the parental involvement component of Head Start. Head Start truly believes that a child's primary educators are their parents. Head Start parents are heavily involved in the governance of the program through their policy councils, and parents also spend countless hours in the programs reading to children, assisting teachers, and planning educational events. The Head Start Bureau reported that 800,000 parents volunteered in classrooms last year alone. The program works best where it is we should leave it at HHS.

Proposed Block Grant Funding of Head Start

The president, in his 2004 budget proposal, introduces an initiative that wages war on the poorest children in our country. The Administration purports that moving Head Start out of the Department of Health and Human Services into the Department of Education is the right thing to do. They claim that this approach will "*sharpen the focus on school readiness, improving teacher training and mandating a system to assess the success of Head Start programs in preparing children for school.*" Under the president's proposal, the transition would begin in 2004, and the Department of Education would assume full responsibility for Head Start in 2005.

I can only conclude that the president fails to recognize the true value of Head Start. We must ensure that Head Start continues to provide our children with comprehensive services. Besides trying to dismantle the Head Start program, the president also announced in his 2004 budget an increase of only $148 million for Head Start. This small increase would not cover inflation and would leave thousands of children behind. How will they be able to afford to fund the new assessment tools and teacher mentoring initiative? This increase also fails to address the likely high costs of transferring the administration of the program to the Department of Education, meaning even less services for those in need.

Further, the president's 2004 budget proposal includes a legislative proposal to introduce an option available to all states to participate in an "alternative financing system." Under

his proposal states would receive their Head Start funds under a "flexible" grant. States are grappling with huge budget deficits that are already placing their existing state pre-kindergarten programs at risk.

States will be put in a position to use Head Start dollars to fill in gaps in their own programs and spread dollars more thinly for our children. We cannot afford to play games with our children and their needs. As it is, states' commitment to early education is relatively limited compared to the federal investment. While 45 states invest in state pre-kindergarten, they spend just over $2 billion compared to the $6.54 billion spent by the federal government on Head Start. Finally, states are already struggling to meet the enormous demands of the No Child Left Behind accountability measures without adequate funding.

Seasonal and Migrant Head Start: A Record of Success

I would like to take a moment to also recognize our Seasonal and Migrant Head Start programs. Many young migrant and seasonal children in the United States are taken to the fields because their parents have no other place to leave them while they work. Sometimes young children take care of even younger siblings in camps or fields while their parents work hard in the fields. Migrant and seasonal farm workers work in various sectors of our nation's agriculture industry – from harvesting to sorting to processing to everything in between. It is hard work and it takes special skills. Most families earn less than $10,000 a year and do not have health benefits.

Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs serve nearly 32,000 migrant children and nearly 2,500 seasonal children annually. Seasonal and Migrant Head Start programs operate in 39 states in every region of the country. These programs offer positive, nurturing child development programs for children ages birth to school entry age. Thirty-five percent of Migrant and Seasonal Head Start's enrollment is comprised of infants and toddlers.

Getting migrant and seasonal children out of unsafe environments is a starting point for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs, but they do much more. Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs answer basic needs for migrant and seasonal children and their families, by seeking to break the cycle of poverty created by moving from place to place with the changing harvest.

Migrant and Seasonal Head Start is very different from other programs. Because of the nature of farm labor, children need full day services – often from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. and often 6 days a week. In many states, Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs operate from May to October, rather than the typical school year schedule, and of course, many families and children are on the move for much of the year and need services at different times, in different states and location.

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Why the proposed changes don't work for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Programs

Migrant and Seasonal Head Start, like other Head Start programs, is currently administered by the Department of Health and Human Services and is funded directly by the federal government. Under the law, there is a separate federal Programs Branch for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start.

If this program is transferred to the Department of Education and funded through a state grant several critical issues related to delivery of services will surely arise:

- ✓ The vast majority of children in Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs are migrants. How will states provide services to children who only reside in their states temporarily?
- ✓ Because Migrant and Seasonal Head Start provides full day services and is targeted to harvesting seasons, an important resource for the agricultural industry will be lost and children will be in the fields – in harm's way.
- ✓ The majority of children served in Migrant and Seasonal Head Start are infants and toddlers, who with their parents are often learning a second language. Loss of this specialized early involvement refutes brain development research regarding emergent literacy. The President's plan only addresses the pre-school portion of Head Start.

Seasonal and Head Start Programs Need Additional Funding

Based on a 2001 Head Start Study, *Descriptive Study of Seasonal Farm Worker Families – September 2001*, only 19% of eligible migrant children and 2% of eligible seasonal children in our country are being served. This compares to a 60% national rate of participation. Seasonal and Head Start programs need additional funds to expand services to children in need. They do not need a "flexible" grant proposal, which possibly threatens their already insufficient budget. They also need to continue to serve the children and families of migrant and seasonal workers with a comprehensive program which includes: education, parent involvement, social services, health and disability services and nutrition – this will never be achieved in the Department of Education.

Closing Remarks

I would like to close by restating that Head Start works. It has helped over 20 million children develop the skills needed to succeed in school and move towards a productive future. It is able to accomplish this through its founding principle that children cannot learn when they are hungry, or sick, or too worried about their home situation to concentrate on school. The success of Head Start and the hope of parents around the country will only be preserved if we keep this program in the Department of Health and Human Services and enhance its funding, not block grant it. We cannot play games with

the future of our country. Giving our children a head start gives our nation a leap forward.

APPENDIX D – WRITTEN STATEMENT OF WADE F. HORN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES; ACCOMPANIED BY RUSS WHITEHURST, DIRECTOR, INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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STATEMENT BY

WADE F. HORN, PH.D.
ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 6, 2003

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, I appreciate the opportunity to testify before you today on the President's plan to strengthen Head Start and work to ensure that every child has the opportunity to enter school ready to learn. I want to take advantage of this opportunity to discuss the President's Head Start reauthorization proposal, focusing attention on the provision allowing interested states to coordinate preschool programs—including Head Start—to better meet the needs of children and their families.

The Head Start Program

Let me begin by saying a few words about the Head Start program and its impact on early care and education throughout the country.

As you know, Head Start was launched in 1965 as an eight-week summer program for low-income children. Its purpose was to prepare these children for success in school and life, through participation in a comprehensive program that included education, health, nutrition, social services, and parent involvement. With strong bipartisan support, Head Start has expanded over the past four decades and now serves over 900,000 children and families each year.

In addition to increasing the number of children served, the Head Start program itself has evolved over time to better meet the changing needs of children and families. To give you just a few examples: Head Start began as a center-based program, where children came to the center for services. We now offer home-based and mixed program options as well. Head Start began as a half-day program. Today, more than 230,000 children receive full-day services to help meet many families' need for full-time care. And Head Start has been expanded to include services to pregnant women, infants, and toddlers through the Early Head Start program

In addition to its own evolution, the Head Start program has triggered changes in early care and education across the country. More than 40 states and the District of Columbia now have early childhood programs of their own—many modeled on Head Start. Numerous states are revising their standards for child care and preschool programs. And as research has demonstrated the importance of providing comprehensive services, states now are involved in trying to integrate a multitude of other programs aimed at young children and their families—from Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, to the Children's Health Insurance Program and Medicaid, to special education, disabilities screening, and assessments—and the list goes on.

Federal and state governments currently spend some $23 billion each year for child care and preschool education—and much, much more than that when you consider the other health, nutrition, and welfare-related programs that serve these same children and families. Never has there been such a clear commitment on the part of federal and state governments to enhance the well-being of children and families. Never have we known so much about what children need for healthy growth and development. Never have so many programs been focused on meeting these needs of our most vulnerable citizens.

And, as you might expect, there is good news and not-so-good news in all of this.

The good news is that there are more resources currently available for low-income children and families than at any other time in our nation's history. We also have a wealth of research about a child's development and what type of activities enhance that development.

The not-so-good news is that Head Start does an okay job, but it does not do a terrific job. Children in Head Start enter school further ahead than other economically disadvantaged children. But unfortunately – even after 30 years – Head Start children do not enter school at the same level as more economically advantaged children. This Administration does not support a status quo that is not helping America's most vulnerable children.

Additionally, we are seeing an alarming lack of coordination among many of the programs and services designed to meet the needs of this population. This has resulted in large gaps and patchy areas in our safety net, to the detriment of young children and their families.

In some places, state pre-kindergarten and Head Start programs are located in the same community and one or both programs are under-enrolled and are competing for the same children and families. Meanwhile, there are other communities where large numbers of children remain unserved by either state pre-kindergarten or Head Start. To further complicate this issue, when services in the early childhood years are not fully coordinated, children can end up in three different settings within a single day: early childhood special education services, Head Start, and child care.

The President's Proposal

To strengthen the Head Start program, improve services to low-income children, and promote the coordination and integration of comprehensive early care and education services, President Bush is asking Congress to include in the reauthorization of the Head Start Act a provision that will allow interested states to include Head Start in their preschool plans.

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Under the President's proposal, states are offered the opportunity to coordinate preschool programs with Head Start programs in exchange for meeting certain accountability requirements. States wishing to participate must submit a state plan for approval to the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary of Education that addresses several fundamental issues concerning preschool education. The state plan must address how it will work with the public school system to develop goals for all preschool programs in the state; identify guidelines that preschool programs can use to achieve these goals; devise an accountability system to determine whether children are achieving the goals; provide professional development for preschool teachers and administrators; and, help parents provide support for children to succeed in kindergarten. In addition, states must describe how they will maintain the comprehensive range of child development services for children in Head Start, including the provision of social, parental, and health services.

The President's proposal has several key characteristics that are frequently misunderstood, misinterpreted, or overlooked altogether. I imagine, Mr. Chairman, that you and your colleagues have received numerous phone calls and letters around some of these issues. I would like to set the record straight.

First, the President is <u>not</u> proposing to block-grant Head Start funding to the states. In fact, Head Start will continue to be managed as a federal-to-local program, except in those instances where states choose to develop plans for comprehensive and integrated preschool services that are approved by the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary of Education. To be clear on this point, states are not required to take advantage of this opportunity nor are we proposing that the Head Start program be turned over to states with no strings attached.

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Second, any state that takes advantage of this option will be expected to make a commitment to maintain the integrity of the comprehensive nature of Head Start services. At the same time, states must also improve and prioritize the educational components of Head Start – improving pre-school education for economically disadvantaged children in the state. Further, states must serve as many Head Start eligible three- and four-year olds as are currently being served through Head Start and they must provide the comprehensive services currently found in Head Start, including social, family, and health services. And plans for ensuring the ongoing professional development of staff and administrators must be in place.

Third, states must maintain their current level of state spending on preschool programs. In other words, states will not be able to cut back on state preschool spending because they now have Head Start dollars.

Finally, states will have to explain how they intend to coordinate the use of funds across all state and federal programs that have the purpose of promoting school readiness, as well as how they intend to administer the program. The President's purpose in making this option available to the states is to coordinate preschool programs to better meet the needs of children. States will receive Head Start dollars only when they have an approved plan in place that supports this goal.

The Bottom Line: School Readiness

The bottom line for the President is school readiness -- improving learning experiences and accountability for outcomes of those experiences. Research tells us a great deal about the skills and knowledge children need to be successful in school. And success in school is a strong

predictor of success in life, as reflected in lower delinquency rates, less teen pregnancy, higher incomes, fewer health issues, less suicide, and so forth.

The Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES) is at the center of our research on the quality and effects of Head Start. Under FACES, child outcomes are measured through direct assessment, observation, and parent and teacher ratings, drawing upon a nationally stratified random sample of 3,200 children. FACES provides, for the first time, national data on Head Start child outcomes, family involvement, key aspects of program quality, and teacher practices.

Findings from FACES research allow us to compare the performance of Head Start children enrolled in 1997-1998 and children served in 2000-2001. Both groups of children entered Head Start with levels of academic skills and knowledge far below national norms. Although both groups demonstrated progress in early literacy and social skills, their overall performance levels when they left Head Start still remained below national norms of school readiness. Therefore, we must do more to ensure that Head Start children enter kindergarten with strong literacy skills.

In responding to the President's *Good Start, Grow Smart* initiative, the Head Start Bureau has already undertaken a number of efforts aimed at bolstering the school-readiness of Head Start children. The Strategic Teacher Education Program, known as STEP, launched last summer, was designed to ensure that every Head Start program and every classroom teacher has a fundamental knowledge of early development and literacy, and of state-of-the-art early literacy teaching techniques. More than 3,300 local program teachers and supervisors have received this training and have served as "trainers" to the nearly 50,000 Head Start teachers across the

country. I am pleased to report that these trainers are telling us that the STEP training is making a difference in their classrooms.

Following the summer training sessions, the Head Start Bureau hosted national training conferences on mentor-coaching and social-emotional development. These events expanded the skills of teachers and supervisors in fostering effective classroom practices. A national Web-based resource, called STEP-Net, has been created to help early literacy specialists access resources and tools, and to exchange information and promising practices. And the Head Start Bureau is planning additional efforts to support programs and classroom teachers to foster effective early learning and literacy for Head Start children. For example, the Head Start Bureau will provide training targeted at improving the screening and observation of children.

As you know, the President has made accountability a guiding principle of his Administration. In keeping with that principle, we are working to make sure that we measure the outcomes of our efforts, not merely the processes and procedures that make up each of our programs. In the end, the most important indicator of any program's efficacy is whether it is, in fact, helping those it is intended to help.

Good Start, Grow Smart calls for not only the improvement and strengthening of Head Start through intense, large-scale efforts in the areas of early language and literacy, but also for a method to track the results of this effort. I believe this is necessary even though the Head Start program has been showing benefits for parents and children. We must do a better job of determining how well Head Start children across the country are being prepared for academic success once they enter school. This fall we will begin implementing the Congressionally mandated assessments of the school readiness of all the four-year old children in Head Start.

In developing this outcomes-oriented system, we are working with a technical workgroup that advises and guides our selection, development, and use of reliable and valid measurement tools. We are equally committed to assembling measures that have been thoroughly tested, and where no reliable and valid instruments currently exist, we will enlist the best researchers to develop and refine them before including them in the outcomes-oriented reporting system. Our short-term goal is to include only those assessment tools that are reliable and valid for use with economically disadvantaged four-year-old children with the cultural, socio-economic and linguistic differences of Head Start children.

This assessment system will not duplicate the information or research strategy already underway in the Head Start Impact Study already mandated by Congress. Results from that randomized study will not be available until 2006.

Current Partnerships

I should point out that, despite its federal-to-local program structure, Head Start has always recognized that the states play an important role in the formulation and implementation of policies and initiatives that affect low-income children and their families. Partnerships have always been one of Head Start's highest priorities.

These include partnerships with local school districts -- nearly 450 of which operate Head Start programs -- and local governments -- 150 city and county governments operate Head Start programs .

In 1990, when I was Commissioner of the Administration on Children, Youth and Families, under President Bush, we launched the Head Start-State Collaboration Projects. We now have State Collaboration projects in all 50 states, as well as the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Their purpose is to create significant, statewide partnerships between Head Start and the states in order to meet the increasingly complex challenges of improving services for economically disadvantaged children and their families.

Through these and other efforts at the state and local levels, Head Start has sought to support the development and enhancement of state-level efforts to build early childhood systems through linkages, coordination, and integration of policies and services. We will continue these efforts to forge significant partnerships on behalf of children and families to remove as many obstacles to partnership as possible. This reauthorization of the Head Start Act affords us the opportunity to take a significant step in that direction, by offering states the option to include Head Start in their state preschool plans.

The Time is Right

As I suggested earlier, one of the reasons the Head Start program has remained strong over the course of nearly four decades is that it adapts to accommodate to the changing needs of children and families. Now, more than ever, economically-disadvantaged children and their families need a strong, coordinated system of early care and education.

The time has come to allow states to fully integrate Head Start into their preschool education planning. We can no longer afford to dissipate precious resources through overlapping and ill-coordinated programs. Most importantly, we cannot afford to have children slip through the gaps that such a cobbled up system inevitably creates, particularly when children with the greatest need for support continue to remain below national norms of school readiness.

Children and families deserve the best support that states and local communities can provide. The President asks that you give states the option of integrating Head Start—our nation's leading program for low-income preschoolers—into their planning for coordinated services.

Other Improvements

Before concluding my statement, I would like to briefly highlight a couple of other aspects of the President's Head Start reauthorization proposal that will strengthen our ability to ensure program quality and accountability and better support school readiness.

Of particular note, our proposal would change the current set-aside for training and technical assistance to provide the Secretary with greater discretionary authority to allocate these resources each year in a manner that will maximize benefits to children and families. Our proposal would also provide flexibility in targeting funds to quality improvements. Training and technical assistance resources have grown considerably in recent years at a rate well above the growth of Head Start while, at the same time, grantees have had access to quality improvement funds that provide them additional resources for these activities. These changes will allow the Secretary to determine the appropriate level of funds for these activities taking into account all the other needs of the program and the children and families served. For example, in FY 2004, it is

increased flexibility will provide for enrollment increases in those areas of the country with the greatest unmet need for Head Start services.

In addition, other changes are included to strengthen the program and address the President's commitment to enhancing school readiness for all children.

Conclusion

In closing, let me reiterate that the President's proposal is to give states an option. Their participation will not be required.. This is not a block grant; rather, it is a proposal designed to offer states the flexibility to better serve low-income children and families. Where states decide not to participate, the Administration for Children and Families will continue to provide oversight and guidance to ensure program quality and effectiveness.

It is the Administration's belief, that America's children and families will not have the coordinated network of early care and education services they deserve until states have the option of integrating Head Start into their comprehensive state plans. We ask your support in making this option available to benefit our most vulnerable citizens.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your commitment and dedication to the well-being of our nation's children, and thank you, members of the committee, for your interest in hearing about our proposal to make Head Start stronger, and the lives of children and families better.

APPENDIX E -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JOHN G. ROWLAND, GOVERNOR OF CONNECTICUT

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Remarks by Governor John G. Rowland
Concerning Connecticut's School Readiness Initiative
U.S. House of Representatives
Subcommittee on Education Reform
March 6, 2003

Connecticut's School Readiness and Child Day Care Grant Program

This week, President Bush sent an important proposal to the nation's Governors designed to give us some flexibility and support in improving preschool programs in our states. In his proposal, the President offers each state government an opportunity to improve its network of early childhood services for 3- and 4-year-olds by integrating preschool programs with Head Start. The President asks for greater accountability, better coordination among programs, and higher standards for our preschools to make sure that children develop important skills and behaviors before they enter kindergarten.

I commend the President for this initiative and I would like to announce that Connecticut wants to be the first state to accept the challenge. We believe that Connecticut has taken a number of steps that are consistent with the President's vision of a coordinated system of early childhood services. This includes clear standards and expectations, greater access for children from low income families, and a system of accountability that focuses on preparing children for school by emphasizing language development, pre-reading skills, the ABCs, vocabulary, and knowledge of numbers, as well as attention to social and emotional development.

Today in Connecticut, children who are born into low income households have access to readiness programs that can help them to overcome the effects of poverty and develop skills that give them a greater chance of success in school, and in life.

Connecticut's School Readiness and Child Day Care Program was created in 1997 to provide high-quality preschool services for three- and four-year-old children in urban and high-poverty districts. Some funds are also used for individual high-need schools that are located in suburban or rural communities. We believe that this program has helped Connecticut to take a major step forward in closing the achievement gap between poor and minority students and students statewide by investing our education dollars early, when they count most.

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Through a partnership between the Department of Social Services and the Department of Education, the state invests over $40 million annually to fund high-quality preschool placements for more than 6,000 children. This is about the same number of children served by the federal Head Start program in our state. We chose to use state dollars to purchase additional capacity of existing providers such as Head Start, nonprofit community-based or church sponsored programs, public preschools and private, for-profit programs. This has helped save time and money in getting children into quality programs right away.

Most of the funds are used to place 3- and 4-year-old children in full-day, year-round programs, but funds may also be used to fund half-day programs and wrap around programs. This is decided by local readiness councils--appointed by local mayors and school superintendents-- which have the authority to fashion programs to meet the needs of their communities. In this way, the state works with local officials to target funds to meet the preschool needs of each community. We believe that this is a workable model to carry out the President's call for better coordination of preschool programs.

In addition, the state provides funds for:

- 60 family resource centers at local elementary schools ($6 million) which connect families with programs that help support student success and,
- additional state-funded Head Start Services to improve and expand the federal Head Start services into year-round programs ($5 million).

The School Readiness Program is designed to ensure that services are high-quality, that government agencies work together to ensure the well-being of children, that local communities are involved in defining their needs and designing solutions, and that there are enough safe, secure facilities to house quality early childhood education programs.

What about quality? The initiative ensures high-quality preschool programs in several ways. First, the program has established standards that all participating early childhood programs are expected to meet. Programs can demonstrate that they meet these standards in several ways: by becoming accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), by meeting Head Start approval criteria, or by meeting the requirements of the American

Montessori Society or the National Education Association of Schools and Colleges as well as Connecticut's own Standards for Preschool and School Readiness Programs.

Connecticut's standards cover eleven different areas:

- Interactions among Teachers and Children
- Curriculum
- Relationships among Teachers and Families
- Staff Qualifications and Professional Development
- Administration
- Staffing
- Physical Environment
- Health and Safety
- Nutrition and Food Service
- Evaluation

In addition, the State Board of Education has adopted the Preschool Curriculum Framework and Benchmarks for Children in Preschool Programs, which spells out curricular goals and content standards for preschool programs as well as the skills that children should demonstrate when they enter kindergarten. The President's plan calls for states to establish expectations and hold programs accountable by assessing standards of learning in literacy, language and numeracy skills. Connecticut's program connects preschool standards to the K-12 system to make sure that students are prepared to succeed in the elementary classroom.

How many children are served? Since 1998, when the School Readiness Program began, the number of positions available for children to attend early childhood education programs has increased by almost 200 percent. Inner city classrooms are changing. For example, more than 8 in 10 kindergartners this year at the Helene Grant School in New Haven attended preschool. The school poverty rate is 65 percent. 74 percent of the students in Hartford's Fisher school are poor, 78

percent attended preschool. At least 60 percent of the children enrolled in the program in any district must be low income -- at or below 75 percent of Connecticut's median family income.
Our work is not completed, however. While we now serve more than 6,000 additional children, the state Department of Education estimates that thousands more three- and four-year-olds could benefit from participation in the program statewide.

As for Service Linkages, the School Readiness program links preschools with health care services, parent employment programs, family resource centers and local elementary schools. The results have been impressive. In the area of healthcare, for example, preschool workers have become a critical link between children and public healthcare services. About 97 percent of children in the School Readiness Program now are covered by health insurance for medical care as a result of efforts by the school readiness system and HUSKY-- the state's free or low-cost health plan for children.

Community Involvement and local decision-making have been basic components. In order to receive a grant from the School Readiness program, each participating district must create a School Readiness Council. These local councils are appointed by the mayor and local school superintendent, and they serve on the council. Together, these two community leaders appoint parents, early childhood providers, and representatives of other local organizations that provide services to children in an effort to bring a wide range of resources and expertise to the issue of early childhood education.

Once appointed, the Council makes recommendations concerning local needs in early childhood education, identifies existing local resources, encourages public participation, facilitates coordination among local service providers, and makes recommendations to the chief elected official and superintendent on issues related to school readiness. The President's plan will help reinforce program coordination by bringing federal policy in line with this very effective state-local partnership for the delivery of preschool services. By incorporating federal, state, local and private dollars to provide community-based services, parents will have maximum choice in the selection of quality preschool programs for their children.

How have we addressed Infrastructure needs? To support renovation and construction of early childhood education facilities, several banks and the Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities

Authority (CHEFA) created a Child Care Loan Fund. The Fund includes a tax-exempt bond pool that has issued more than $37 million in bonds, a $20 million loan guarantee program, and a direct loan program for projects under $10,000. So far, CHEFA has helped 17 municipalities develop facilities for almost 3,000 additional children in early education programs.

We have also focused attention on Professional Development of early childhood teachers. The School Readiness program supports Connecticut Charts-A-Course, a state-wide career development plan for early childhood and school-age care providers. Charts-A-Course encourages childcare providers to pursue the child development associate credential (CDA), a national standard for childcare workers, and works with several community colleges across the state to provide coursework leading to both the CDA credential and degrees in early childhood education. Charts-A-Course also provides scholarships, access to high-quality in-service training for program staff, and career and accreditation support. Connecticut Charts-A-Course has become a model for other states that want to professionalize and improve the quality of childcare providers. In addition, the State Department of Education provides annual opportunities for courses with credit from institutions of higher learning in "emerging literacy", "challenging behaviors", "cognitively challenging curriculum", and "science" for school readiness staff.

The School Readiness Program also provides grants to priority school districts to support staff training, mentoring and staff development.

As for Ongoing Evaluation, the School Readiness program has developed an evaluation tool for childcare providers that is based on the Standards for Preschool and School Readiness Programs and asks providers to examine their programs and practices in the areas of health, nutrition, family literacy, parent education, professional development, transition to kindergarten, parent satisfaction, accreditation, continuous quality improvement and inclusion of students with disabilities as well as staff qualifications, program quality improvement and parent satisfaction.

The state is also developing a performance assessment system linked to the Preschool Curriculum Framework and Benchmarks for Children in Preschool Programs so that the outcomes of individual children can be evaluated in relation to the state standards. Five communities are also participating in a longitudinal study that will determine the impact that preschool has on student performance in reading, writing and math on the fourth-grade Connecticut Mastery Test.

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So what have been the results? A preliminary evaluation of the School Readiness Program conducted for the state by James T. Bond of the Families and Work Institute demonstrated several promising outcomes. Between 1998 and 2000, child outcomes, center quality and staff qualifications all improved markedly. Students enrolled in preschool programs in 1999-2000 were more engaged in complex interactions with other children and complex play more than in previous years. Centers offered more training to staff during non-work hours, offered more financial assistance for staff to become credentialed, and had higher levels of parent participation than before. Finally, the educational qualifications of center directors and teachers have improved drastically since the start of the Readiness Program.

A study of schools in Bridgeport showed that students who attended preschool had better attendance, better reading behaviors and better reading scores and were far less likely to repeat a grade than students who did not attend a preschool program.

Another study conducted in Connecticut by Yale University concludes that pre-K programs had a significant impact in increased competence, reduction in behavior problems, improved grades and attendance in elementary school and improved state achievement scores.

Connecticut's program has received praise from many observers, including the Wharton School of Business, which highlighted the program's efforts at facilities expansion and our partnerships with the business sector.

In all, Connecticut's Early Childhood Initiative has brought many benefits to thousands of families in our poorest and neediest communities, and has helped thousands of children begin their academic careers on the right foot. By providing quality preschool services, we are helping students --who otherwise would not have access to learning resources in the first years of life-- to enter kindergarten vastly better prepared to become successful students, citizens and members of the community.

APPENDIX F – WRITTEN DOCUMENT SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE JOHN G. ROWLAND, GOVERNOR OF CONNECTICUT

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New Opportunities, Inc.

Corporate:
232 North Elm Street
Waterbury, CT 06702
Telephone: 203-575-9799
Facsimile: 203-755-8254

February 11, 2003

The Honorable John Rowland
Governor, State of Connecticut
State Capitol
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Dear Governor Rowland:

I enjoyed our recent meeting and have given some thought to the comments you made regarding the Head Start program. Additionally, I have spoken with a couple of the larger agencies in Connecticut that operate Head Start and want to bring back our thoughts and some of our considerations on this matter.

Generally speaking, we do not have a problem with President Bush's proposal to block grant Head Start nor with the idea of the subsequent involvement of the state in operating the program. Our concerns have always been around maintaining some of the best and most crucial elements of the program, which revolve around the health and educational development of the entire family. Historically, Head Start has been successful because the program attends to the needs of the whole child, including physical and mental health, social and emotional development, and early childhood education, and in partnering with the family and supporting the family in their parenting roles.

There is concern in Congress that some states may give short shrift to these important elements if the program is no longer operated under federal auspices. However, some of the Connecticut Community Action Agency Executive Directors and Head Start Directors I have talked with feel quite confident that you and your Commissioners will be committed to developing an outstanding program: one that maintains the best elements while looking to strengthen the program's weaknesses. Our directors want to explore how we in Connecticut can work to preserve the important components while strengthening literacy and improving the credentialing of staff.

We are willing to lend our support and want to work with you in the development of a state funded Head Start program. We would even be willing to support this in the form of Connecticut becoming a pilot site for the development and implementation of this concept.

As always, I look forward to working with you to better serve low-income children and families throughout this great state.

Sincerely,

James H. Gatling, Ph.D.
President/CEO, New Opportunities, Inc.

Community Action Agency

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APPENDIX G – WRITTEN DOCUMENT SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY WADE F. HORN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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Policy Position

HR-8. Head Start: Strengthening Collaboration Policy

8.1 Preamble

Head Start is a federal discretionary grant program with a long history of providing comprehensive child development and support services to low-income children and families at the local level. The Governors recognize the essential role that Head Start plays in providing comprehensive services to children and families, and believe that Head Start should be part of a collaborative effort to create a more integrated, cost-efficient system of early care and education for children. With the advent of welfare reform across the nation, states have increased their investments in, and placed greater emphasis on, programs that provide child care and development assistance to families. Governors believe there is an increased need for greater collaboration among all programs that provide services to children, including Head Start, in an effort to improve child well-being and help to move more individuals and families toward self-sufficiency.

With so many different early childhood programs providing services to similar populations, Governors are committed to improving coordination and collaboration among programs. The intent is to create a system that is more responsive to the needs of working parents and that supports opportunities for children to participate in high-quality programs that involve communities in the planning and implementation of service delivery. Governors believe that Head Start provides a vision of comprehensive services that all early childhood programs can benefit from, including a focus on the entire family, links to health and social services, and a well-developed staff training system.

8.2 Recommendations for Enhancing Collaboration

Governors are pleased that progress has been made on both the state and federal level to move toward greater collaboration between Head Start and other programs that provide services to low-income children and families. However, some barriers still remain, and, whenever possible, federal, state, and local officials should work together to create a common vision across all early care and education programs. While recognizing the importance of maintaining the local administration of the Head Start program, Governors are supportive of exploring options to provide stronger incentives to foster collaboration.

Examples of ways that collaboration could be enhanced include, but are not limited to, the following.

8.2.1 Separate Funding Streams. The various streams of funding for child care and early education programs make it difficult to encourage collaboration between Head Start and child care programs. In order to achieve a more effective continuum of care for children and to make collaboration easier, for example, reporting and funding requirements among all early childhood programs could be standardized.

8.2.2 Varying Eligibility Requirements. Early childhood programs, such as Head Start, child care, and preschool/prekindergarten programs, often vary in their eligibility requirements. Greater flexibility in

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eligibility requirements among early childhood programs, especially in communities where all children eligible for Head Start are being served, could ultimately lead to more effective partnerships and a greater number of children being served.

8.2.3 State Role in Monitoring. To ensure that Head Start programs are an integral part of the larger early care and education systems, states should have the opportunity to provide direct input in monitoring as well as in decisions about funding new grantees, or refunding and expanding existing grantees.

Time limited (effective Annual Meeting 2002-Annual Meeting 2004).
Adopted Winter Meeting 1994; reaffirmed Winter Meeting 1996; revised Annual Meeting 1996; reaffirmed Annual Meeting 1998; revised Annual Meeting 2000;reaffirmed Annual Meeting 2002.

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APPENDIX H – WRITTEN STATEMENT OF NELL R. CARVELL, DIRECTOR, THE LANGUAGE ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES PROGRAM AND HEAD START INITIATIVES, SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

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Testimony of Nell R. Carvell
Director of the Language Enrichment Activities Program and Head Start Initiatives,
Southern Methodist University

"Head Start: Improving Results for Children"

Hearing before the
Subcommittee on Education Reform
Committee on Education and the Workforce
United States House of Representatives

March 6, 2003

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you to discuss the federal Head Start program. In particular, I am gratified to discuss how incorporating a language-rich curriculum into Head Start could result in significant educational gains for America's children from low-income families. Two items form the focal points of my testimony:

I. **A Quality Curriculum Results in Significant Gains for At-Risk Children:** I will present how a successful Head Start Program in Dallas establishes that incorporating a language-rich curriculum into Head Start produces outstanding results for children from poverty—and how hard data backs this up.

II. **Such a Language-Rich Curriculum Would Complement Existing Head Start Programs—and Not Take Away from Them:** Enhancing Head Start by including such a language-rich curriculum would involve adding such a curriculum, and would not involve discontinuing any of the health, nutritional, and other valuable social services that Head Start currently provides.

A Critical Need: Preparing the Nation's Children for School

Failing to Prepare Children for School: The Large Costs

"Children who start behind, stay behind," noted Tom Hehir, former director of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs. The gap between a child's achievement and potential widens over time—and leads many frustrated students to drop out of school. Personal losses from dropout are high, as are the costs to society. On average, a high school dropout results in lost lifetime productivity and wages and other costs ranging from $470,000 to $750,000 (in 1997 dollars). Particularly at risk of falling behind are children from

low-income families, who have less access to academic resources than their better off peers. They often begin school with language abilities that lag a year and a half behind those of children from middle-class families.

A Replicable Example of Success: Producing Significant Educational Gains for Children from Low-Income Families in Dallas

The Road to Results: Developing a Quality Curriculum for Kids from Poverty

In 1989, the Texas Instruments Foundation committed to improving the educational performance of children from low-income families in the Dallas community. Central to the Foundation's approach was collaboration. It first commissioned a study by the University of Texas at Arlington to determine whether establishing a model preschool program could prepare disadvantaged children for educational success. The Foundation then teamed with Head Start of Greater Dallas in 1990 to establish a model preschool—the Margaret H. Cone Head Start Center—for 90 four-year-old children in a predominately African American neighborhood. Its location is next door to federal housing projects in one of the most economically depressed Dallas neighborhoods—an area plagued by high rates of crime and unemployment. In 1990, families served by the Center had an average income of about $7,000, a single parent headed 90% of their households, and 39% of Cone parents graduated from high school.

Hitting Social Services First: Effective for Social Development, But No Educational Gains

During the Center's first two years (1990-1992), the Foundation funded a comprehensive array of services—beyond those usually available through a Head Start center. It offered a year-round program, extended hours, a full-time staff that included a nurse practitioner and two social workers, a parent employment program, and increased staff benefits and salaries. The services were beneficial to many, and resulted in gains by Cone children in various developmental areas. But crucially, data produced by UT Arlington research revealed that—after two years of the enhanced social service program—Cone children were still not making gains in language and cognitive skills. After their year at Cone, children were no more ready for elementary school than those who had not benefited from Cone's services. Their scores on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills after completing kindergarten were consistently in the 20th-30th percentile. The TI Foundation determined that it had to do more to improve the academic curriculum at Cone.

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The Next and Necessary Step:
An Enhanced and Effective Educational Program

In 1993, the Foundation approached the Southern Methodist University (SMU) Learning Therapy Program, of which I am the Director of the Language Enrichment Activities Program and Head Start Initiatives, to create a pre-reading curriculum. The result was the Language Enrichment Activities Program (LEAP), a research-based, scientifically-based program that is age appropriate, interactive, and consistent with Head Start's focus on emotional and social development. LEAP aligns with the Head Start performance standards and NAEYC accredidation standards. LEAP focuses on enhancing vocabulary development, phonological awareness, listening skills, and fine motor skill development. It also includes basic math and science concepts, such as sorting, measuring, and counting. Children are not situated at desks; rather the day involves play and enjoyment. Learning experiences flow from self-initiated activities and multisensory experiences around the classroom. LEAP is not a scripted program, but teachers receive a LEAP instruction guide to assist them and provide ideas. The program curriculum and materials cost $1,000 per classroom. Teacher training is available for an additional cost of $900 per teacher, which includes all course training materials. Designed for four-year-olds, a companion curriculum—Baby LEAP for three-year-olds—is scheduled for distribution in summer 2003. In addition, a dual language LEAP curriculum is available for Hispanic students.

What Constitutes a Language-Rich Preschool Curriculum

Among preschoolers, vocabulary, letter knowledge, and phonological awareness—in addition to social and emotional factors—have a significant impact on later success in school. A language-rich preschool curriculum focuses on developing these crucial preliteracy skills.

The curriculum uses a developmental, interactive teaching methodology in conjunction with an enriched language program. Classroom activities are intended to stimulate intellectual curiosity, develop logical thought processes, support cognitive growth, enhance language opportunities, and build phonological and print awareness skills.

The program emphasizes the areas of receptive and expressive language in both oral and written form. At the center of the curriculum is the availability of quality children's books. In addition to reading to children every day, teachers include language in a variety of activities: games, pictures, experiences, and interactions. These activities serve to build vocabulary and phonological awareness, knowledge of the letters of the alphabet, and a basic awareness of math and science concepts like measuring, counting, and sorting. Teachers are encouraged to talk to the children in conversation as often as possible during the day, modeling correct grammar and a rich vocabulary. By incorporating counting and word games, nursery rhymes, fairy tales, and creative play in learning centers, children learn oral language in a child-centered environment. In addition, activities that involve print, literature, writing, and language experience charts encourage print awareness. In sum, the knowledge and skills gained through the curriculum increase children's chances for success in kindergarten and beyond.

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The Result:
Significant Gains in Academic Achievement

Performance data from assessments of the children both before and after their year at Cone (and beyond) have proven the success of LEAP.

Improvement in Preschoolers' Cognitive Skills After Participation in LEAP
Children who took the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) after their year at Cone in 1990-1992—prior to the implementation of LEAP—scored on average in the 20th-30th percentile. Average scores on the ITBS from 1995-2001, after the implementation of LEAP, increased to the 60th-70th percentile. Last year, under a new test—the Stanford 9—children who had just completed their year at Cone using the LEAP curriculum scored in the 75th-87th percentiles, well above the national norm.

Academic Gains from LEAP Lasting into Elementary School

High Percentage of Cone Children Reading At or Above Grade Level at the End of Third Grade: In spring 2001, 85% of third graders who had participated in the LEAP program at Cone and had attended the local elementary school—Frazier Elementary (which uses a curriculum that emphasizes literacy)—could read at or above grade level on the Stanford 9. This 85% compared with only 66% of Frazier third graders who had not attended Cone who were able to read on grade level. Cone third graders also scored higher in 2002 on the Stanford 9, with 90% of Frazier third graders who had attended Cone reading at or above grade level, as compared with 74% of Frazier students who had not attended Cone.

LEAP Students Surpass Their Peers on State Assessments: On the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills, students who attended Cone score on average 15 percentage points above peers at Frazier Elementary who did not attend Cone. Frazier's scores are among the best in the state, which is in itself a remarkable success story involving collaboration, leadership, professional development, enhanced accountability measures, and the provision of supplemental services. In 2001, 100% of third graders who had attended the Cone Center and kindergarten through third grade at Frazier passed the Texas assessment. Partly as a result of this performance by former Cone students, Frazier earned the coveted Texas Education Agency rank of "Exemplary"—an exceptional feat in light of the fact that 97.9% of Frazier's students are from low-income families (2001 percentage).

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Three Central Elements of LEAP that Contribute to Success:
Teacher Training, Volunteer Involvement,
and Preschool-Elementary School Collaboration

Crucial to the success of LEAP is the teacher training. Many instructors of preschoolers—at Head Start and elsewhere—have not received quality education in writing, spelling, reading, and learning strategies. Thus, a central component of LEAP is the SMU teacher training program, with a focus on instructors' language skills and the application of LEAP materials. Participants receive 40-45 hours of training, which includes lecture as well as practice. There are two training programs, which differ in requirements and focus. Teachers in one program receive three-hours of undergraduate credit from SMU. Teachers in the second type of training are those who hold a Bachelors or Masters degree; they obtain three hours of graduate credit. As of February 2003, about 1,600 teachers and teacher's assistants had received LEAP training. Those who provide the training must satisfy some exacting requirements: they must hold a Masters Degree, participate in extensive LEAP training, and have experience as a LEAP teacher.

Volunteers enhance the program; they visit classrooms weekly to read and talk with children. In addition, collaboration between the Cone Center and Frazier Elementary (where most Cone children attend elementary school) is ongoing and communicative. Cone's teachers and director meet with Frazier's principal and kindergarten teachers quarterly. Each spring, Frazier receives a list of incoming Cone students along with information about their developmental levels.

Spreading the Benefits of LEAP
Expanding the Program to Benefit Preschoolers
in the City, State, and Nation

The success of LEAP at the Cone Center has led various groups to adopt the program—both in Texas and across the country. As of May 2003, approximately 45,000 children will have benefited from the LEAP curriculum. These children attended preschool in over 1,100 Head Start and public school classrooms. While most of these classrooms are currently in Texas, teachers and children in several other states are also embracing LEAP.

Expanding the LEAP program has become a joint venture of Head Start, the private sector, and the state. We believe that the federal government should encourage the adoption of quality, language-rich preschool curricula for children from poverty in every state—and that such assistance should encourage collaboration between state, private, and federal sectors. The following is an overview of the expansion that has taken place—and displays the promise of what could come about through increased federal assistance.

City Leaders Form Collaboration;
Commit to Having All Children from Poverty Benefit from LEAP
Approximately 1/3 of the 31,000 at-risk children in Dallas (based on 2000 Census data) do not attend preschool. Of the over 20,000 who do, most will receive the benefits of LEAP by the end of the 2002-2003 school year. LEAP's implementation is widespread in the city

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because major early childhood education providers in Dallas have embraced it—including the Dallas Independent School District, Head Start, Child Care Group, and Child Care Management Services (CCMS) (with each CCMS provider participating on a voluntary basis).

In addition, community leaders from a broad range of organizations have collaborated to close the gap for the remaining children. They desire that every disadvantaged child in Dallas County be prepared for reading and learning in kindergarten as a result of experiencing the research-based and proven LEAP curriculum. The collaboration—formed through the efforts of the nonprofit Foundation for Community Empowerment and its founder, J. McDonald Williams, Chairman of the Trammell Crow Company—includes a cross-section of community and educational leaders in Dallas. Members include:

- Child Care Group
- Child Care Management Services
- Dallas Citizens Council (CEOs of the top 250 companies in Dallas)
- Dallas Housing Authority
- Dallas Independent School District (DISD)
- Foundation for Community Empowerment
- Greater Dallas Chamber of Commerce
- Head Start of Greater Dallas
- National Center for Educational Accountability
- Southern Methodist University
- Texas Instruments Foundation
- WorkSource for Dallas County

Head Start of Greater Dallas has implemented LEAP in all of its 26 Dallas area sites. In addition, the DISD began using LEAP in all of the district's Title 1 preschool classrooms—which total 240—during the 2002-2003 school year; approximately 500 DISD teachers trained in LEAP lead these classrooms. And the Texas Work Force of Dallas has granted funding for LEAP training and materials for 100 of its child care providers. By the summer of 2003, these efforts will begin to impact a total of over 12,500 at risk children in Dallas each year. These significant expansions of LEAP establish a well-nourished seedbed for meeting the collaboration's goal: having all disadvantaged preschoolers in Dallas County benefit from the LEAP curriculum.

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Expanding LEAP Across Texas and the Nation

Texas Expansion
Early childhood educators in approximately six large Texas cities and forty Texas towns currently employ LEAP. This includes over 500 classrooms in Dallas and approximately 100 in Houston and Austin, respectively. The Texas Legislature and Texas Education Agency have served as primary supporters—and initiators—of this widespread adoption of LEAP by passing legislation and establishing grant programs.

Expansion Across the Nation
Upon learning of LEAP's effectiveness, educators from across the country have sought out the program—and are implementing it. Preschoolers in school districts and Head Start programs in Alabama, Louisiana, and California currently benefit from LEAP while LEAP pilot sites are active in Maine and Virginia.

Alabama: Five hundred and forty preschoolers in Tuscaloosa County, Alabama experience LEAP. These children—in both the city's school system and Head Start centers—come almost entirely from economically disadvantaged circumstances. Yet their gains after only one year of the LEAP curriculum are substantial: preschoolers who experienced the curriculum increased their score on the DIAL-3 assessment of developmental skills from an average percentile rank of about 31-32% at the beginning of the school year to an average percentile rank of about 58% at the end of the school year.

California: Members of the California Reading and Literature Project have implemented the program in 125 classrooms in California in 2002. LEAP staff has trained over 125 California preschool teachers in the curriculum.

Expansion into Additional States in 2002-2003: Young children living in Louisiana, Maine, and Virginia are beginning to experience the curriculum during the current school year at pilot sites—and educators in all three states plan to expand to additional classrooms next year. LEAP instructors, through SMU, have trained classroom teachers in these states that use the curriculum. School districts and Head Start agencies in Alaska, Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Washington have sets of the curriculum. Many are interested in teacher training as well as the LEAP curriculum; participation appears to be limited principally by the need for funding.

A Beneficial Fit:
LEAP and the Federal Agenda

As the Head Start Reauthorization moves forward, serious consideration should be given to replication of quality preliteracy programs similar to LEAP in Head Start programs across the country—and, indeed, in every program that serves pre-kindergarten children from poverty. I urge the committee to consider measures that would encourage the use of such research-based,

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substantive preschool curricula in programs in every state. The goal is for each at-risk child to enter kindergarten prepared to read and to learn. Research documents the resulting benefits to children during kindergarten and their later years—and to society as a whole. LEAP and similar substantive programs can serve to fulfill this need. Through data, LEAP has been modified, improved, and proven effective; it is replicable across the country; and it could form a valuable key to opening the door to a quality—and crucial—preschool experience for the nation's children.

This concludes my remarks. Thank you again for this opportunity to appear before you. I am glad to respond to any questions that members of the committee have.

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APPENDIX
Assessment Instruments for Preschoolers:
Using Effective and Age-Appropriate Tools

Types of Tools: Child-Friendly and Reflective of Skill Levels:
Assessments of preschool children focus on a broad range of abilities. Primary among them are a child's receptive language skills, expressive language ability, motor skills, concept knowledge, vocabulary, and phonological awareness. Often these assessments ask children to simply point to a picture that corresponds with what the administrator expresses. Other assessments require a child to answer orally. For samples of the type of questions asked, see Appendix I. In addition, Appendix II contains a description of the various assessments employed at Head Start Centers where Texas Instruments has funded program evaluations. Both sets of materials display the child-centered and child-friendly nature of the assessments.

Time Involved and Number of Questions:
The amount of time necessary to complete an assessment varies depending upon which assessment a program uses and how experienced the administrator is. An estimated administration time for various assessments is 15 to 20 minutes while others may take an hour or more to perform. The number of questions also varies from assessment to assessment. And, when taking an assessment, the number of questions each child is asked varies depending upon a child's level of ability. An assessment administrator stops asking questions when a child gets a high proportion of questions incorrect at a certain difficulty level. A rough estimate of the number of questions asked of children on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, for example, at Dallas Head Start programs funded by TI is approximately 60 items for the majority of three-year-olds and approximately 72 items for the majority of four-year-olds.

Response of Children to Assessments
Bill D. Ball, a licensed specialist in school psychology who assesses children at various Head Start centers in the Dallas area, describes the children's positive reaction to the assessments:

"Most children enjoy the assessments. They get one-to-one attention from an adult. We let them select stickers at the end of assessment. They view the assessment as fun, like a game. They enjoy showing assessment administrators what they know. If a child does not want to participate in the assessment, we don't force the issue. We tell the child "OK." Then we try back in a few days. Children typically agree to assessment the second time they are asked. If a child is sick or is having a rough day, they are removed from the assessment list for that day. The most common problem is that once children in a class get to know the assessment administrators, they all beg the administrators to take them next."

Almost all children are able to be assessed. As Ball explains, "We do encounter some children who we are not able to assess. However, with receptive language measures like the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Third Edition, this occurs with only about 2% of 4 year old children and 4% of very young three year old children."

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APPENDIX I – WRITTEN STATEMENT OF RON HERNDON, CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL HEAD START ASSOCIATION AND DIRECTOR, ALBINA HEAD START PROGRAM, PORTLAND, OREGON

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Testimony of

Ron Herndon
Chairman, National Head Start Association
Director, Albina Head Start Program
Portland, Oregon

Before the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM
Committee on Education and the Workforce

U.S. House of Representatives

"HEAD START: IMPROVING RESULTS FOR CHILDREN"

March 6, 2003

Chairman Castle, Ranking Member Woolsey, and Members of the Subcommittee:

On behalf of the National Head Start Association (NHSA),[1] I am pleased to be here to testify on an issue to which I have dedicated almost my entire adult life – ensuring the well being of low income children and families.

I commend you, Mr. Chairman, Members of this Subcommittee, and indeed the entire Congress for your longstanding and bipartisan commitment to Head Start. For nearly 40 years now, members of Congress and administration officials have worked side-by-side with the Head Start community to identify an agenda for enhancements and improvements to meet the evolving challenges facing Head Start. NHSA fully expects that this reauthorization will involve the same considered review that has been the hallmark of the past several reauthorizations of the program. We are confident that an objective assessment of Head Start will conclude what we ourselves have determined: Head Start provides real and meaningful benefits, sustained over time, for our nation's neediest children and families ... and that there remains room for improvement.

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[1] The National Head Start Association (NHSA) is a private not-for-profit membership organization dedicated exclusively to meeting the needs of Head Start children and their families. The Association provides support for the entire Head Start family by advocating for policies which provide high quality services to children and their families; by providing extensive training and professional development services to all Head Start staff; and by developing and disseminating research, information, and resources that impact Head Start program delivery. NHSA represents more than 900,000 children and their families, 170,000 staff and 2,051 Head Start programs in America. NHSA provides a national forum for the continued delivery and enhancement of Head Start services for at-risk children and their families.

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NHSA takes pride in the way the Head Start program has evolved and thrived during its 38-year existence. At the same time, NHSA is mindful that we will continually face challenges related to ensuring quality in the provision of comprehensive services, expanding the program to meet the needs of changing families, and coordinating and collaborating with a growing network of early childhood programs.

The balance of this statement will address the issues I have been asked to focus on today, including:

- The success of the Head Start program;
- Ways in which the Head Start program can be improved; and
- Recommendations for the future of Head Start.

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THE HEAD START SUCCESS STORY

For more than 38 years, Head Start has been a beacon of hope for low-income children and families. Its mission is simple: to prepare children to succeed in school and to give them the tools necessary to achieve their goals in life. There is abundant evidence suggesting that Head Start has been successful in meeting its mission.

The success of Head Start is rooted in its design, which recognizes that at-risk children need comprehensive services in order to become "school ready." The program offers an array of services, with a strong emphasis on pre-reading skills, mental and physical health screenings, immunizations and nutritious meals.[2] We know that preparing children to learn is about more than just teaching letters and numbers. Head Start aims to give children the skills and abilities that will serve them throughout their school careers – curiosity, an interest in learning, and the ability to pay attention in class.

In addition, although Head Start generally is thought of as a program that primarily serves children, it actually is a program that serves families. Visit a Head Start center and you will find parents reading to their children, participating in policy councils, taking part in family literacy training, or even studying to get their GED. It is the comprehensive nature of the services offered and the focus on the whole family that distinguishes Head Start from more traditional early childhood programs and explains its success.

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[2] The Head Start Information Report for 2000-2001 found that Head Start programs were providing the following important comprehensive services: 826,406 children were provided a medical screening, 769,755 have had a professional dental examination, 832,456 are up to date with all their immunizations, 48,532 were referred for mental health treatment, 213,692 children and families received emergency or crisis services and 69,786 children enrolled have speech or language impairments that are being treated.

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Since the inception of the program in 1965, more than 20 million children and their families have benefited from Head Start. Many of the children enter Head Start facing significant barriers to learning and with basic skills well below those of their wealthier peers.[3] They may enter Head Start with serious health problems or may suffer from learning disabilities, serious emotional problems, or debilitating depression. A full 27 percent of the more than 900,000 children currently enrolled in Head Start programs live in homes where English is the second language. In too many cases, children come to Head Start classrooms having witnessed violence in their homes and in the neighborhoods where they live.

Despite these obstacles, Head Start children leave the program prepared for school and are given an opportunity to succeed. Certainly, one-year of Head Start for a 4-year-old will not provide that child with everything that he or she needs in order to escape poverty, but the program at least gives these children a fighting chance, as is evident by the fact that former Head Start graduates have gone on to lead very rewarding lives. (We are proud to say that one graduate is a current member of Congress!)

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[3] Several studies have found that compared to more affluent children, poor children have worse nutrition and more physical health problems. See Brook-Gunn, J. Britto, P.R., & Brady, C. (1999). Struggling to make ends meet: Poverty and child development, In M.E. Lamb (Ed.) *Parenting and Child Development in "Non-traditional" families"* (pp. 279-304). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. See Also Stipek, D.J. and Ryan, R.H. (1997). Economically disadvantaged preschoolers: Ready to learn but further to go. *Developmental Psychologist*, 33(4), 711-723. Poverty is also associated with an increase in emotional and behavioral problems. See McLoyd, V. (1998). Socioeconomic disadvantage and child development, *American Psychologist*, 53(2), 185-204. Poor nutrition has been found to hinder a child's physical and intellectual development and thus their ability to learn. See Korenman, S., Miller & J.E., Sjaastad, J.E. (1995). Long term poverty and child development in the United States: Results from the NLSY. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 17, 127-155.

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Head Start Leads the Way in Promoting Quality

Head Start works because it is a quality investment in America's future. For the last 30 years, NHSA has been at the forefront of just about every effort to continue to improve the quality of Head Start programs across the country.

Consider the following examples that help illustrate the many ways in which the Head Start community has worked to improve the quality of Head Start:

- During the 1990 Head Start reauthorization, NHSA worked with Congress to create a quality set-aside that, when adequately funded, goes directly to improving the professional development of Head Start teachers across the country. Significant portions of the funds go to improve the literacy and language development training of our teachers.

- NHSA worked to improve the quality of Head Start through the Improvement Act of 1992, which eased the process for Head Start programs to purchase facilities and strengthened the comprehensive nature of the program by allowing siblings of Head Start children access to the same health care services. The Act also included strong transportation regulations to ensure that all children traveling back and forth to Head Start remain safe.

- Several important initiatives were supported by NHSA during the 1994 reauthorization process, including the creation of 50 state collaboration grants so that Head Start would

be better able to coordinate with other agencies and state early education and child care programs, and the addition of a family literacy component to Head Start.

- In 1994, NHSA sought legislative changes to ensure that Head Start children and families receive top quality services by aggressively calling for the termination of non-performing grantees. NHSA strongly believes that Head Start children and families should receive only quality programming and that when programs do not perform to expectations, they should lose funding.

- In 1998, NHSA sought to increase the number of highly trained and educated teachers in the classroom and supported efforts to ensure that at least 50 percent of all Head Start teachers have an associate's degree or better by September 2003. We are pleased to report that the Head Start community has already met and exceeded this challenge.

- Following the passage of the 1998 Act, which strengthened the literacy and language development components of Head Start, NHSA worked closely with the Head Start Bureau to develop the Child Outcomes Framework. These are specific indicators for what children need to know in eight learning domains including literacy and language development, numeracy, and even science, before entering kindergarten.

- In 1998, NHSA fought to make it easier for Head Start programs to provide full day/full year services. This extension of Head Start has been critical to the support that families making the transition from welfare to work need.

- In 1998, NHSA supported efforts to improve the transition of Head Start graduates into the public school system.

- NHSA also worked during both the 1994 and 1998 reauthorizations of Head Start to make sure that children with disabilities receive the quality services they need.

- Finally, NHSA developed the HeadsUp! Reading Network to train Head Start and other early childhood teachers across the country in the best practices for teaching reading to young children. This innovative program allows teachers to learn the latest instructional techniques, while also obtaining additional course credit towards achieving associate's and bachelor's degrees.

NHSA is proud of its record of being in the vanguard of critical assessment of Head Start programs and making adjustments where necessary. The result is that Head Start programs are at the highest level of quality ever, and taxpayers are getting the maximum return on their investment.[4]

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[4] Several studies have found that high quality early child development programs like Head Start actually save taxpayers money. Examples include a recent cost-benefit analysis of the Abecedarian Early Childhood Intervention Project, which revealed that for every $1 spent by taxpayers they received $4 in future benefits, and a cost-benefit analysis of the Perry Preschool program found that for every $1 spent on preschool, taxpayers receive more than $7. FPG Child Development Institute. (2002) High Quality child care returns far more than cost—new report. Accessed on November 25, 2002 at http://www.fpg.unc.edu/highlight_Detail.cfm?ID=180; W. Steven Barnett. (October, 1993). Benefit-cost analysis of pre-school education: findings from a 25-year follow-up. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*

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Independent Research Concludes that Head Start Works

Head Start is one of the most studied and evaluated early childhood programs in America. The collective wisdom of these studies is inescapable: Head Start delivers what it promises to this nation's neediest children – a head start in preparing them for school and life.

A report looking at children in California, Connecticut, and Florida found that only 30 percent of 4-year-olds who are not enrolled in Head Start, and whose mothers are on welfare can count to 20 out loud, or write their name correctly. By contrast, 53 percent of Head Start children, in a comparable demographic group, could count to 20, and 66 percent could write their first names.[5] Moreover, recent studies have found that, after leaving the program, children who attended Head Start are less likely to repeat a grade; less likely to require special education classes; and are less likely to commit crimes.[6] Head Start graduates have also been found to be more likely to complete high school and college and earn more than their peers who did not have the benefit of a "head start."[7]

You will be interested to know that a Presidential Management Council report gave Head Start a higher customer satisfaction score than any government agency. Moreover, Head Start had a

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[5] *Business Week*. (August 26, 2002).

[6] Barnett, W.S. (September 2002). *The Battle Over Head Start: What the Research Shows*. Presentation at a Science and Public Policy Briefing Sponsored by the Federation of Behavioral, Psychological, and Cognitive Sciences; Garces, E., D. Thomas, and J. Currie. (September 2002). Longer-Term Effects on Head Start. *The American Economic Review*. 92, 4:999-1012.

[7] Id.

higher customer satisfaction score than many major companies, including Mercedes-Benz and BMW.[8] The facts speak for themselves: Head Start works!

Government-Sponsored Studies Conclude that Head Start Works

Importantly, both the Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES) and the most recent HHS Head Start Monitoring Report have found that Head Start programs provide high quality, comprehensive services to the children and families they serve.

The Head Start Act requires that each Head Start grantee receive a full on-site review of all program, administrative, financial management, and other requirements at least once every three years. Therefore, approximately one-third of all grantees are monitored each year. Additionally, new Head Start grantees are reviewed after completion of the first year of providing services. Programs are reviewed based on the Program Performance Standards as they apply across three major areas: early childhood development and health services, family and community

Of the 554 grantees reviewed, a full 85 percent were found to be providing quality services to children and their families. The remaining 15 percent were required to take action to correct deficiencies. Although NHSA is pleased that the overwhelming majority of programs received a "quality" rating, we will not be satisfied until all programs are judged to be quality programs.

Launched in 1997, the FACES initiative is an ongoing, national, longitudinal study of the development of Head Start children, the characteristics of their families, and the quality of Head Start classrooms. FACES involves a nationally stratified random sample of 3,200 children and families in 40 Head Start classrooms. The most recent FACES study concludes that Head Start graduates enter kindergarten "ready to learn." Head Start children showed significant gains in vocabulary skills and in letter recognition skills.[9]

Key findings of the study reveal that:

- The program narrows the gap between disadvantaged children and all children in vocabulary and writing skills;
- Head Start children are leaving the program ready to learn;
- Once in kindergarten, Head Start graduates make substantial progress in word knowledge, letter recognition, math skills, and writing skills relative to national averages.

[9] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (January, 2001). *Head Start FACES: Longitudinal Findings on Program Performance*. Third Progress Report, iii. See Also Zill, N. (September 13, 2002) *Improving Head Start: What we learned from the Family and Child Experiences Survey*. Presentation at a Science and Public Policy Briefing Sponsored by the Federation of Behavioral, Psychological, and Cognitive Sciences, 20.

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WAYS TO IMPROVE HEAD START: NHSA'S POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

While justifiably proud of the success of the Head Start program, NHSA recognizes that the program is a dynamic one that must constantly seek to improve services for children and their families. As such, in the 2003 reauthorization, NHSA is supporting a number of quality enhancements to the program, including those discussed below.

Enhance teacher qualifications. Mr. Chairman, we are deeply gratified that you have embraced our position on teacher qualifications. Although our teachers are well trained, motivated, and have many years of experience, it is now time to take the next step. NHSA understands the importance of teacher qualifications. We were the first to insist that all teachers have at least a Child Development Associate Credential, which is an intensive training and assessment of knowledge and practice in early childhood education. We worked with the full Committee during the last reauthorization to ensure that at least 50 percent of all Head Start teachers have an associate degree or better by September 2003 – a goal that already has been met. Today, we are recommending that at least 75 percent of Head Start have at least an associate's degree by 2005 and that all Head Start teachers have at least an associate's degree by 2008, and that we eventually move toward the goal of requiring that every Head Start teacher have a bachelor's degree. We recognize that there are practical difficulties in reaching the latter goal, but we are committed to working toward it.

Provide student loan forgiveness. Head Start teachers, on average, earn only $21,000. During the 1998 reauthorization, NHSA worked closely with this Committee to increase the compensation of our teachers. However, compensation for all Head Start staff and teachers

remains inadequate. If we are serious about improving the quality of Head Start and making sure programs can attract and retain well-qualified teachers and staff, we must work together to create strong incentives to achieve such an outcome. NHSA proposes that this Committee support a student loan forgiveness plan to make it more affordable for all teachers and staff to go back to school to get their degrees. Currently, bipartisan discussions are under way in the Senate to expand student loan opportunities for Head Start teachers.

Require every Head Start employee to have a career development plan. Many Head Start programs already have career development plans to ensure that all teachers and staff receive the training they need and want. Nonetheless, it would be helpful to require that all Head Start programs design career development plans for their staff so that they receive the necessary guidance to obtain degrees, training, and the specialized knowledge that will better enable them to better serve the needs of Head Start children and families.

Create a new technical and training system. NHSA supports the creation of a new training and technical assistance system that would address the comprehensive nature of Head Start and focus on all the aspects of the Head Start program. This system should include coordination with state Head Start Associations and state preschool entities. This will not only ensure quality but improve the coordination between state preschool programs and Head Start..

Strengthen state collaboration offices. As the organization that pushed for 50 collaboration grants, we understand the need for Head Start to coordinate with other federal and state early care programs. NHSA supports the continued strengthening of state collaboration offices.

Increase the Early Head Start set-aside and develop a seamless program. More and more research has found that learning begins at an earlier age than once was thought to be the case. To address the needs of infants, the Early Head Start program was established. This successful program currently is serving children pre-natal to the age of 3. However, because of a lack of funding, the program has been able to serve just three percent of all eligible kids. We believe it is time to make a serious commitment to providing seamless services to children pre-natal to the age of 5. To accomplish this goal, we propose that the Early Head Start set-aside be increased and that Head Start grantees be given the flexibility to provide services to children pre-natal to age 5.

Allow Head Start programs the flexibility to enroll more families above the income guidelines and to serve the working poor. Currently, Head Start serves families at 100 percent of the poverty line, which is about $15,020 for a family of three. Right now, a family can be poor enough to receive Medicaid and Food Stamps but not poor enough for Head Start. The Head Start Act allows programs to enroll 10 percent of their families from above the poverty line. With the passage of welfare reform in 1996, many families who are now working find themselves slightly over the poverty line and thus ineligible for Head Start. To remedy this situation, NHSA proposes that Head Start programs be allowed to serve 25 percent of their families above the income guidelines. To ensure that the most deserving families are served first, safeguards should be put in place to ensure programs serve the neediest children before reaching beyond the poverty level.

Fully fund Head Start. Head Start has enough funding to serve just six out of every 10 eligible children, leaving approximately 400,000 eligible children unable to enroll because of a lack of funding. With $1 billion in funding, Head Start would be able to serve an additional 100,000 children and families. Unfortunately, the administration's proposed funding increase of $148 million is not enough even to keep pace with inflation. Fully funding Head Start is not a question of money or resources; it is simply a question of priorities and values.

Support a Five-Year Reauthorization. Head Start needs enough time to put any new quality initiatives into place. To ensure that Head Start programs are able to put in place necessary reforms, NHSA proposes a five-year reauthorization.

THE FUTURE OF HEAD START

Head Start remains as important today as it was 38 years ago, helping children in poverty get the learning opportunities, nutritious meals, health care, and social and emotional support they need to enter school ready to learn. The founding principles of Head Start – that disadvantaged children need comprehensive, quality early education to start school ready to learn along with their more advantaged peers – are no less critical today.

Despite the impressive accomplishments of Head Start, NHSA and the entire Head Start community are the first to say that we can do an even better job on behalf of this nation's neediest children. In fact, throughout its history, Head Start has embraced change and has never shied away from the kind of critical assessments that have sparked the innovative and quality improvements central to the success of the program.

As noted above, the government's own research and independent studies reach the same conclusion: Head Start is a program that works. NHSA shares the president's desire to enhance the literacy and language components of Head Start, and to improve the coordination of Head Start with state preschool and child care programs. At the same time, it is our position that these goals can be met within the structure of the current program. For this reason, we remain puzzled as to why the administration is resurrecting recommendations that have been soundly rejected in the past, namely, shifting Head Start to a block grant to the states and moving the program out of the Department of Health and Human Services and into the Department of Education. When then-President Jimmy Carter made these same proposals, Congress rightfully rejected them. We respectfully suggest that this Congress similarly dismiss the most recent proposals and instead work to provide the resources that will enable Head Start to enhance teacher qualifications and serve more eligible children.

Let us be perfectly clear, we believe that shifting to a block grant and moving this program to the Department of Education would have the effect of dismantling Head Start as we know it. Both issues are addressed in greater detail below.

BLOCK GRANTS: DISMANTLING HEAD START

It is not apparent to us how shifting Head Start to a block grant program to the states – without performance standards and without additional funding – will do anything to improve the quality of Head Start. Instead, such a shift is likely to result in chaos for the immediate future as cash-strapped states figure out how to use the funds. At the same time, sending Head Start dollars to the states will most assuredly lead to a dilution of the quality of Head Start. While bipartisan

Congresses have sought to strengthen the program's performance standards and enhance monitoring requirements, the administration's plan would instead rely on the good will of debt-ridden states to ensure quality.

NHSA takes little comfort in the most recent attempt of the administration to disguise its proposal as a "state plan option," rather than as the block grant it likely will function as. Though we have seen few specifics of how the administration intends to structure the program, we do know how it has been represented in the news media by the plan's architects. Based on those characterizations, we remain convinced that what we really are faced with is a plan to dismantle Head Start in favor of block grants to the states with few restrictions on how the money may be spent.

While Head Start provides low-income children and families with high quality and comprehensive services, there is no guarantee these standards or services will be maintained if states are given control over the funding. Though we don't doubt the sincerity of the states' interest in early childhood development, we do know that the states vary considerably in the services they provide in their early childhood programs. In one study, researchers examined over 30 state pre-school programs, mostly located within the public school system, and found alarmingly lax standards.[10] More than half of the states reported having no program requirements at all, and only 20 percent of the states required providers to meet their state's rules for obtaining a license to run a child-care program. Finally, about 30 percent of the states applied state

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[10] Ripple, C., Gilliam, W., (in press). What can be learned from state funded pre-kindergarten initiatives? A data-based approach to the Head Start devolution debate. In E. Zigler & S.J. Styfco (Eds.), *The Head Start Debates (friendly and otherwise)*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

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elementary school guidelines to preschool services, without attention to developmentally appropriate practices for these youngest of students.[11] Unlike Head Start, which maintains the highest quality through the national performance standards and has a rigorous monitoring system, most states do not have even basic oversight of their early childhood development programs.

Furthermore, while Head Start provides children with strong reading skills, it also provides important comprehensive services. Of the 30 state pre-school programs examined by researchers, only six required on-site caseworkers to be available and half did not provide regular vision, physical, and mental health screenings.[12] Only three states were found to provide the same set of eight comprehensive services required of Head Start programs, primarily because they adopted a variation of the performance standards. The researchers concluded that "whereas Head Start programs are mandated to provide comprehensive services to all enrolled children and families, state preschool programs are inconsistent in their delivery of these services."[13] If Head Start is block granted, it should be expected that it may lose the comprehensive services that have been demonstrated to be so critical to the success of the program.

Head Start has always known that a parent is a child's best educator. That is why the performance standards require Head Start to involve parents in the classroom and in the

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[11] Id.

[12] Ripple, C., Gilliam, W., Chanana, N., and E. Seigneur (May 1999). Will Fifty Cooks Spoil the Broth? *American Psychologist*. 54, 5: 327-343.

[13] Ripple, C., Gilliam, W., (in press). What can be learned from state funded pre-kindergarten initiatives? A data-based approach to the Head Start devolution debate. In E. Seigneur & S.J. Styfco (Eds.), *The Head Start Debates (friendly and otherwise)*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

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administration of the program itself. The Head Start Bureau reported that in 2002 more than 800,000 parents volunteered in Head Start classrooms across the country, while many others were actively involved in the program through policy councils.

Not only do the children benefit from having their parents involved in their education, but several studies also point to the fact that Head Start and Early Head Start programs significantly improve the economic self-sufficiency of parents who participate in the programs.[14] This level of parental involvement is in stark contrast to what occurs in state preschool programs. Only about 35 percent of state preschool programs require local preschools to involve parents in governing and implementing the program.[15] Just four states involve parents to the same extent as Head Start, including participation on advisory councils, opportunities to volunteer in the classroom, regularly scheduled conferences, and parent education programs.[16] Again, it should be expected that shifting to block grants will result in less direct parental involvement.

By block granting Head Start there is also a strong risk that states will not provide the same quality of services or that the funds will not reach the neediest families. A recent study by the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) found that federal funds are eight times more likely than

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[14] Oyemade, U.J., Washington, V., and Gullo, D.F. (1989). The Relationship between Head Start Parental Involvement and Economic and Social Self-Sufficiency of Head Start Families. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 58(1); Plutro, M., (1990) A Comparative Study of Parental Perceptions of the Impact of Head Start on Their Lives. *Dissertation Abstracts International* (51). A recent Early Head Start study also found that Early Head Start parents were more likely to read to their children, be emotionally supportive, help with language development, and show positive parenting behavior. One other key finding was that Early Head Start parents also participated more in education and employment-related activities.

[15] Id.

[16] Id.

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state funds to target the poorest children.[17] Thus, the premise that states are in a better position to provide services to low-income children is completely unsubstantiated. Although we believe that every governor and state cares about children, historically there has not been a strong political will among the states to provide comprehensive early childhood development services to the poorest children. Sadly, researchers have found that the more poor children residing in a state, the fewer dollars the state was likely to spend per child on early education services.[18]

States faced with ballooning state budget deficits may find that they are not in a position to maintain comprehensive and high quality programs serving the highest number of children, even with funds from Washington. Although the administration speaks to the importance of comprehensive services, its plan does nothing to ensure that states will be required to or capable of providing these services, especially in a time of serious budget deficits, as many states currently are experiencing.[19]

Unfortunately, states forced to balance their budgets now are in the position of having to cut preschool and other early care programs. For example, this year, both New York and Ohio decided to make significant cuts in their state investments in early education. In one prime example, Gov. George Pataki has decided to cut the state entire pre-kindergarten program in order to balance the budget. The proposed cut means that 60,000 children will no longer receive early education services. Ohio is also looking to significantly cut their state investment in Head Start. And, these are not isolated incidents. Last year, North Carolina eliminated all state funding

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[17] General Accounting Office. (1998). State and Federal Efforts to Target Poor Students. Washington, D.C.

[19] Some estimate that the combined deficits of all the states will reach $68 billion by June 30, 2003 if not more. Kadlec, D. (December 9, 2002). How to balance a budget. *Newsweek*. 50-55.

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for Early Head Start. In Massachusetts, additional cuts are planned to early education programs, on top of the already nine percent cut in the fiscal year 2003 budget and another 10 percent reduction in state funding for Head Start. Michigan cancelled $1.358 million in quality funds provided for several purposes, including a pre-school program for 3-year-olds.[20] Other states such as Illinois have made attempts to use state preschool dollars to cover deepening budget shortfalls.

In the end, shifting Head Start to a program of block grants, no matter what it is called, will do little more than distract from the serious efforts needed to help the program continue to improve. It should be rejected.

HEAD START IS MORE THAN A LITERACY PROGRAM! IT SHOULD REMAIN IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

As stated earlier, NHSA strongly supports efforts to improve the pre-literacy components of Head Start. However, moving Head Start to the Department of Education and then to the states actually would have the opposite effect and would jeopardize the many other important comprehensive services the program provides.

Certainly, a critical component of Head Start is the development of pre-reading skills, but that is only one part of a much broader picture. While the Department of Health and Human Services administers Medicaid, TANF, child care, and provides medical screenings, the Department of

Education has no track record in providing any of these services. These services are critical in order for a child to develop literacy skills. It may seems obvious, but a child who is hungry, has hearing or vision problems, or suffers from depression, is not likely to have the motivation or necessary physical or mental health to learn to read.

Furthermore, many children enter Head Start with severe emotional problems because they come from families where a parent is addicted to drugs, in jail, or where domestic violence is prevalent. Most kindergarten teachers will tell you that they would prefer a child to enter their classroom well behaved, healthy, and curious to learn rather than have a child who hits other children, suffers from untreated physical and mental health issues but can name several letters of the alphabet. Head Start has always believed it is possible to accomplish both goals, making sure children are healthy and prepared to learn, while also teaching them strong literacy skills. Head Start is already accomplishing these two objectives, but NHSA urges Congress to further strengthen the literacy component of Head Start within the comprehensive framework that Head Start has always provided to our children and families. It is our view that we need to continue to raise the bar in literacy and language development, but in such a way as to not jeopardize the critical comprehensive components of the program that make learning possible.

Let us also not forget the parental involvement component of Head Start. As stated earlier, parents are partners with Head Start in helping their children achieve a better life. While we commend the administration and this Congress' efforts to strengthen the parental involvement component of public education, most objective observers have concluded that education

[20] Children's Defense Fund. (September 5, 2002) Low-Income Families Bear the Burden of State Child Care Cutbacks.

programs, such as Title I, do not in any way involve poor and minority parents in their child's education to the same extent as Head Start. Moving Head Start to the Department of Education would dilute or eliminate this critical aspect of the program. The administration's proposal makes no mention of ensuring a role for parents beyond a vague reference to providing them with information and giving them a "choice" in selecting a preschool program.

Mr. Chairman, Head Start already provides poor parents many choices that the public schools have been unwilling to provide for years. Parents are empowered to decide who will teach their children; they are provided opportunities to volunteer in the classroom; and Head Start is required to work with them in every aspect of their child's experience in the program. The administration's plan does nothing to ensure that moving Head Start into the public school system would preserve any of the choices Head Start parents already enjoy.

NHSA hopes that Congress will join with us to improve the quality of the literacy and language skills training in Head Start programs, rather than diverting resources, time, and focus to an untested idea. Literacy and language skills training have been part of the mission of the program since its inception, and we will work closely with members of the Committee and this Congress to raise the bar for our nation's most vulnerable children. It is our hope however, that this goal can be accomplished without dismantling or weakening the comprehensive components of Head Start that are so critical for preparing children to succeed in school and to develop strong literacy skills.

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APPENDIX J – WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DWAYNE A. CROMPTON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, KCMC CHILD DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

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STATEMENT OF DWAYNE A. CROMPTON
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HEARING ON HEAD START REAUTHORIZATON
Thursday, March 6th, 2003

Good Morning Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify on behalf of the thousands of successful Head Start programs across the country and to speak before this committee on how to continue to improve Head Start for the more than 900,000 children who rely every day on this program for their health, nutrition and cognitive development.

I know that there are hundreds of other Head Start directors who could easily be sitting in this chair talking about what Head Start means to their communities and how they work every day to deliver high quality, comprehensive services to the poorest of America's children.

My name is Dwayne Crompton and I am the Executive Director of KCMC Child Development Corporation in Kansas City, Missouri. Through our Early Head Start, Head Start, and Community Partnerships Programs in three counties and our Child and Adult Care Food Program in some 15 other Missouri counties, KCMC serves almost 3,700 children every day.

Knowing how important it is to reach our most vulnerable children quickly, our Early Head Start program collaborates with a number of partners to serve pregnant women and families of newborn children from birth to three years of age. In Early Head Start, we work with home-based providers to help them connect locally with social, health and nutrition programs that serve income eligible women to provide child development education and support services as soon as possible. Currently, KCMC's Early Head Start provides home-based services to 44 families, services through family child care to 38 families, and full-day, full-year center-based services to 197 families.

KCMC Child Development Corporation has also created numerous initiatives that work collaboratively with local school districts, community-based child-care programs and family child-care homes. These initiatives extend the reach of our program beyond the classroom out into various communities and bring benefits to thousands children and families with the greatest need.

As the Executive Director of KCMC Child Development Corporation for the past 27 years, I have spent my life working to ensure that Head Start continues to provide high quality, comprehensive services to the poorest children in my community; to ensure that it works collaboratively with other early childhood programs in my state; and to ensure that the program applies the best thinking in early childhood research in our work with children.

For as long as I have been involved with Head Start, the program has seized every opportunity to improve the services it provides for children and families. We embrace change in Head Start. From my perspective and experience – which includes the classroom, the kitchen and the Board Room – Head Start works. We should not change the nature of the program by devolving it to the states and losing its performance standards and strong commitment to comprehensive services. Instead we should improve it, continuing in our efforts to ensure that every poor child has access to this high quality early childhood program. I do not want Head Start to become static or be swallowed up by a huge impersonal bureaucracy. Neither do the tens of thousands of Head Start parents and staff across the country. That will be a tragedy of immense proportion.

Testimony of Dwayne Crompton

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Specifically, I think that Head Start should continue to follow its strong performance standards, ensure accountability, provide comprehensive services and remain a federal to local program within the Department of Health and Human Services. During this reauthorization, we should work together to strengthen these areas of Head Start, not to devise ways to weaken one of the most meaningful social programs the country has ever established.

I do not speak to you in the sterile language of the researcher or in the abstract terminology of the sociologist. My extensive work with Kansas City's poorest children and parents has shaped my thinking and focused by views on Head Start. Based on my experience, I offer my perspective on four key issues that I think are critical to this reauthorization debate.

1. COLLABORATION

In Head Start programs across the nation, we serve our children and families through partnerships. These collaborations are possible because Head Start values collaboration—and in fact, holds programs accountable for their work with community partners. As outlined in a Department of Health and Human Services Head Start monitoring report, 82 percent of programs reviewed had no negative findings in the independent federal review and evaluation of their program's community partnerships. And these evaluations are extensive—monitors don't just talk to Head Start staff, but they interview parents, collaboration partners from the community and representatives from governing boards and policy groups.

For KCMC, the list of collaborative partners is expansive.

Collaborations with schools.
First, our partnership with local school districts allows us to deliver Head Start programs on school district sites. These collaborations allow us to share facilities and provide joint training of Head Start and school district staff. In these school-based Head Start centers, Head Start children receive part-day and full-day services through the integration of Head Start into other early childhood classrooms, and all children in these classrooms receive Head Start's comprehensive services. In these collaborations, the school district operates the Head Start program, while Head Start staff provides the monitoring and technical assistance.

In addition to these shared facilities and resources, KCMC has established formal agreements with schools special education services to conduct screenings, assessments, and Individualized Education Plan conferences for our Head Start children.

Finally, we work to ensure a smooth transition to kindergarten for Head Start children and their families. We have transition agreements with school districts to ensure continuity for families as their children enter school and we provide parents with opportunities to visit kindergarten classes with their current Head Start teachers. We also conduct shared Head Start, school district parent meetings and activities to ensure that parents are comfortable with the K-12 system and are able to maintain their active role in the education of their children which they began in Head Start.

Collaborations with early childhood programs.

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In addition to our work with local schools, we have, like many of other programs, found ways to bridge Head Start with child care and preschool programs so that children in other settings can benefit from Head Start's comprehensive approach.

Specifically, we have initiated two programs that bring Head Start and other child-care providers together. One program, called *New Start Child Care Partnership*, provides full-day, year-round care to Head Start children. Another effort, called *Full Start*, leverages Head Start dollars to provide a full range of Head Start's comprehensive services to children in child care centers in neighborhoods where Head Start programs are not located.

Because we are aware that home-based care is a cornerstone for early care and education in America, we also manage a *Head Start Family Child Care Partnership*. Through this initiative, we provide Head Start's comprehensive services to 179 children in 25 family child-care homes.

Collaboration with Parent Education Programs.
KCMC Child Development Corporation has partnered with Parents as Teachers in school districts in our three-county service area to coordinate recruitment of children and families, developmental and health screening, home visits, joint training and shared resources. As an example, the Parents as Teachers program in the Center School District screens all Head Start children, school district and Head Start staff make joint home visits, and the School District nurse coordinates health activities for all children enrolled in their program.

Collaborations with the Private Sector.
In Kansas City, we are blessed with several generous private foundations and caring businesses that help fill the gap and ensure that coordination continues to help us build a collaborative system of early childhood education in Kansas City. For example, we recently built a state of the art, 28,000 square foot, child and family development center. Building the facility was a $3.7 million effort—and $2.5 million of this sum was provided by businesses, foundations and individual donors—all of whom understand that Head Start's quality and comprehensive services are critical to the social and economic well being of our city.

In all of these partnerships and collaborations -- with business and the community -- Head Start is a leader and valuable partner. We bring to the table two elements that are critical to ensuring that children in Kansas City receive the education, services and supports they need—namely:

(1) a dedication and commitment to high quality services that are enforced through Head Start's essential program performance standards, and
(2) a holistic and comprehensive way of delivering services to children and families that acknowledges that children do not come to our program prepared to learn—that they are not able to put aside hunger or violence or health problems to concentrate on ABCs.

Our partnerships prove how important collaborations are to Head Start. At KCMC, these programs help us meet the full-day needs of working parents in our community and allow us to use Head Start funding to expand the quality of all child care and preschool programs—by

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providing training for education, health care, parent involvement and social services as well as direct medical and dental services.

Challenges To Collaboration.
Obstacles to collaboration do not come from Head Start. Collaboration is often thwarted by under funded potential partners or by state-imposed restrictions and regulations, especially in my home state of Missouri. These obstacles occur because states are trying to balance limited resources, and in the current budgetary environment, things are only getting worse. Under-funded programs that already are struggling to provide child care, housing, emergency food services, health care, after-school and other educational programs are the ones experiencing even greater cuts in services and program quality. It is clear that states across this country are not moving forward to meet the needs of poor children and families. Instead, they are falling backwards.

Let me cite for you a few examples from my home state:

- In Missouri, we have a small state-funded preschool program but these services do not go far enough to meet the needs of all eligible children. Most states in America are like mine, with the majority of prekindergarten spending occurring in just 10 states.
- Income eligibility for child-care subsidies in Missouri is one of the lowest in the country—$17,784 for a family of three, or about 118 percent of the federal poverty level. That means that the vast majority of our state's working poor are not receiving any assistance in covering their child-care needs.
- And just last week our State's House Appropriations Committee voted to completely eliminate the state's Children's Health Insurance Program. If this passes, over 77,000 children from low-income working families will lose their health insurance.

Head Start's success in collaboration and delivery of comprehensive services to our community's poorest children rely on state child-care subsidies and pre-kindergarten programs. We strive to collaborate, but we must have collaborators with financial capability. It is clear that within Missouri and in states across the country, crippling budget deficits have left these services and programs in disarray. The safety net is being shredded and helpless children and families are in danger of falling through. Moving Head Start to the states will not remedy this situation. A strong federal commitment to increased funding of critical services for children would give Head Start programs the tools they need to collaborate and bring benefits to suffering children.

2. QUALITY OF SERVICES

Performance Standards.
The key to quality in Head Start is a set of program performance standards that spell out what programs need to do to ensure that Head Start children meet the high expectations Congress has set for them. Quality services are crucial to Head Start's success. As long as I have worked in early childhood education, I know that quality is easier said than done. Nonetheless, Head Start has accomplished what to many might have seemed impossible. Head Start has actually created a proven formula for high quality services and developed a system to ensure that programs deliver

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the quality that Congress, parents and the community expect. Standards and delivery make all the difference in Head Start.

Let me be clear—program performance standards are not a dusty bureaucratic document that sits on a shelf. At KCMC, the program performance standards are a living document that daily tells us what we should be doing to ensure that children are learning and being prepared for success in kindergarten.

Literacy and Pre-Reading Skills.
Given the increased focus on literacy skills for young children in Head Start, I will describe some of the ongoing efforts we have made at KCMC to address children's cognitive development. We certainly believe that this is a key area of our work. We find that when we address the comprehensive needs of children- such as their home environment, their health care and nutrition needs—Head Start children come into the classroom eager to learn and excited about developing new skills, such as reading.

Our on-going assessments show that Head Start children in Kansas City are developing the important literacy and pre-reading skills they need. Their success is no accident. At KCMC we have taken very deliberate steps based on Head Start program performance standards, and guided by the best research available, to address the literacy of Head Start children. We have an extensive literacy plan that consists of three elements: professional development, resources and materials, and experiences and activities.

With a private foundation grant, we have established a Literacy Lab that manages an integrated agency-wide early literacy program that embraces staff, parents and volunteers. Through professional development, we provide core curriculum training for staff twice each program year on ways to emphasize language, literacy development and the assessment of children's literacy skills in their classrooms. All teachers go through additional trainings to ensure that we are keeping up with the most up-to-date research on how best to address the cognitive development of young children.

We also work to ensure that all Head Start classrooms have access to materials and resources that address literacy and language development. For example, we operate the James Threatt Resource Center, which houses resources and materials for program enhancement in areas of language and literacy, and which provides staff support and meeting space for regularly scheduled teacher and parent training sessions.

We also participate in an innovative and exciting program that is being implemented nationwide. This initiative, called *Jump Start*, partners with local college students to work one-on-one with children on literacy activities and with parents to provide Adult Basic Education opportunities.

Finally, KCMC works to ensure that literacy is integrated into all aspects of our work with children and parents. We provide opportunities for literacy activities during home visits and parent conferences. Through the *First Books Program*, children take home free books that come with a packet of suggested activities for parents to use when reading with their children. Recently, we launched a program called *Males Reading to Children* as an effort to encourage and

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support fathers, uncles, stepfathers and grandfathers to help their young children in developing strong literacy skills.

All of these efforts are reinforced though ongoing outcomes assessments in literacy and early learning. This assessment is tied to our curriculum as well as the Head Start Outcomes Framework to ensure that children are successfully developing these skills before they enter kindergarten. We also conduct classroom assessments using the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale and the Infant Toddler Environmental Rating Scale two times a year to ensure that overall classroom quality supports children's development.

As you can see, we work extensively at KCMC to address literacy and pre-reading skills of Head Start children. The work we do is successful for two reasons that can not be ignored—first we address critical health and nutrition needs of children so that they come to the classroom ready to learn—and second, we ensure that literacy and language development is purposeful and planned.

Qualified Staff and Professional Development.
Setting high standards for teacher credentials ensures high quality teaching and consequently, success for children. In Head Start, Congress required that at least 50 percent of teachers must have an Associate degree in early childhood development or a related field by 2003. In my program, we have exceeded this goal and are working to help our teachers achieve even more. Of the 39 teachers at KCMC, I am proud to say that 19 (49 percent) have BA or BS degree, 15 (or 38 percent) have an AA degree and one teacher has a Master's degree in early childhood development. Thirty-five of 39 members of our teaching staff have met or exceeded Head Start requirements. This success resulted from Head Start's commitment to improving education and its delivery of financial resources for salaries, course reimbursement, and leave time for teachers.

In Missouri, you don't find comprehensive standards nor financial commitment to professional development in the child-care system. Child-care teacher credentials are not uniform throughout Missouri, and, in fact, "teachers" in my state can work in child-care centers without any training in early childhood development.

Challenges to Quality.
If we are going to continue to build a strong teaching staff, which is central to providing high quality early educational services, we must continue to raise the bar and provide the resources so that we can not only hire, but also retain qualified teaching staff. Nationally, teachers in Head Start make on average, $21,750 a year. In my program, a teacher holding a bachelor's degree in early childhood education earns $23,000 to $30,500 a year, a respectable salary but still much lower than the $29,000 to $32,000 comparable teachers earn in our public schools. Head Start reauthorization should continue to raise the bar on teacher credentials and provide the resources to help make this possible.

3. COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES

Providing comprehensive services can sound easy. However, in order to make a difference for children and families who come to us, it is essential that we have the standards that require, and the resources that support, an extensive array of comprehensive services. These requirements are

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at the foundation of Head Start's success. They are the ABCs of our children's early learning and development. They are the tools that make it possible for us to reach our poorest children and bring positive change to their lives.

Let me tell you about the families that we serve and the barriers they face. Nationally:

- Nearly 28 percent of parents with children in Head Start—more than one in four—have less than a high school diploma or GED.
- Almost half of Head Start parents make less than $12,000 a year.
- Almost a quarter of children served in Head Start come from homes where English is not the primary language spoken at home.
- Official reports show that about one in five Head Start children "have been exposed to community or domestic violence in their lives."
- Almost one in every six Head Start children has one or more disabilities—generally a speech or language impairment. Nearly half of all children's disabilities were identified after these children entered Head Start, indicating that Head Start is critical in both identifying and serving children with special needs.
- On average, the early literacy skills of children entering Head Start are significantly below—a full standard deviation below national norms.

In my program, children look much the same.

- 31% of KCMC Head Start parents have less than a high school diploma or GED.
- 54% of KCMC Head Start parents earn less than $15,000 a year.
- 57% of KCMC Head Start children are enrolled in CHIPS.
- 53% are African-American
- 77% of KCMC Head Start children are from one-parent homes.
- 33% of KCMC Head Start parents are unemployed.

The fact that the needs of poor families are so complex is why Head Start is housed in the Department of Health and Human Services and why it should not be moved to the Department of Education.

As a director, I have had the opportunity to see many children and families leave our program confident, educated, healthy and proud. We develop lasting relationships with many families, especially those parents with multiple children who may be a part of Head Start's program for several years.

> *One such parent, was Michelle, who enrolled her son August into the Head Start Program. A few years earlier Michelle had been involved with Head Start as her two daughters went through the program. She said her experiences with her daughters had been so positive she knew Head Start was the place for her family.*
>
> *At the application intake she expressed two concerns with August's health—a speech problem that she seemed to notice and a permanent injury that occurred during birth that had left August unable to have full use of his right arm. She wanted August to be in the same, supportive, educational environment as her daughters. In addition to the*

educational services delivered by our staff knowledgeable in early childhood education, Head Start children also receive yearly dental, physical, hearing and vision screenings. Children also participate in a developmental screening, which can often provide early indications of any health and developmental concerns so they can benefit from early intervention. Families participate in two home visits and two parent/teacher conferences each year.

Knowing that these services were available for August, Michelle felt comfortable discussing her concerns with the family advocate and together they began the process of identifying what August needed to be ready to learn and succeed in Head Start's program. Though KCMC's community partnerships, the family advocate was able to refer Michelle to Children's Mercy Hospital where August underwent a thorough speech evaluation. Children's Mercy Hospital found that August did indeed have a speech impediment, and connected Michelle to the Clay County Health Department. The Department worked in conjunction with the Head Start Mental Health and Disability Consultant to provide speech services for August during the summer prior to entering the Head Start program.

Once August began our program in the fall, staff at KCMC continued to work on services he needed by collaborating with North Kansas City School District to expedite an Individualized Education Plan, which is currently in place.

August is doing exceptionally well in Head Start. He is scheduled for surgery on his arm this month. Michelle is actively involved in Head Start. She frequently volunteers and serves on the Head Start's parent committee and the advisory board. Her praise for Head Start is unending. She also reports that her two daughters are at the "head of their class" academically and socially. She attributes this success to Head Start – and the fact that Head Start addressed the needs of the whole child, and the whole family.

Michelle's story demonstrates the transformational impact that Head Start has when it delivers high quality, comprehensive services to children and families. Inherent in the Head Start is the belief that when children get services that meet their needs and parents are treated as full partners, then children can indeed overcome the many barriers they face and can enter school ready to learn.

Challenges to Comprehensive Services.
If Head Start is moved to the states, it is unlikely that the current level of comprehensive support will be maintained. First, most state prekindergarten programs do not require supports as comprehensive as Head Start. Second, there will be no national performance standards. Third, with state cutbacks in many social programs, the quality of Head Start will be jeopardized as states seek to serve more families without investing additional resources. It is essential in this environment to maintain Head Start's program performance standards that require the delivery of a broad rage of services for our poorest children.

4. ACCOUNTABILITY

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Finally, let me discuss briefly how Head Start programs are held accountable to the high standards set by Congress. As an administrator, I know that standards are only meaningful if there are clear and consistent ways to measure progress, track success, and enforce necessary changes that need to occur to guarantee that high quality services are being delivered to children in every Head Start classroom.

Head Start has established not only extensive performance standards, but also a comprehensive system of evaluation and monitoring to ensure that these standards are met. The Head Start system for accountability reviews programs once every three years to ensure that the integrity of federal dollars is protected and that our nation's poorest children do not miss a single opportunity to grow and develop. Head Start's accountability reaches far beyond the typical desktop monitoring done in state preschool programs. A team totaling as many as twenty-five reviewers spend a week reviewing every aspect of a Head Start operation—curriculum, family and community partnerships, human resources/program development, teacher qualifications and professional development, comprehensive services, health and mental health, disability services, language and cultural appropriateness—to name a few.

A recent Department of Health and Human Services monitoring report shows that 85 percent of programs evaluated in 2000 were found to be delivering high quality services and meeting the needs of children. Head Start programs that do not demonstrate success in providing high quality, comprehensive services in line with program performance standards are given an opportunity to improve. When they do not, they lose their funding.

Recently, Head Start announced a plan to conduct a national assessment of all four-year-old children in Head Start in order to provide more accountability to the program. In my opinion, the Administration's proposal takes us in the opposite direction of where Head Start needs to go to improve services for young children.

Head Start programs are currently required to assess children three times a year. At KCMC, for example, we learned through the assessment process, that in one classroom children were not getting a chance to interact with other children in small groups or to participate in pretend play settings. With this information, we informed the teacher about how to change her lesson plans and modify the curriculum to ensure that children in her class get opportunities to develop these important socialization skills.

The assessment system we use is not a single test—but a daily process we follow to ensure that children are achieving their goals. Our assessments include a wide variety of methods to examine and document the progress of our children, including gathering work samples, observing learning opportunities and documenting progress in reports for parents, and in conducting direct assessments. These assessment systems allow our teachers to gather information on where children are developmentally and to identify ways to strengthen our programs for the benefit of children and families.

The new assessment planned by the Administration is a narrow one that only collects data from a direct test of children's knowledge. This test only asks questions related to literacy, language and numeracy. Child development experts agree that a single direct assessment does not produce

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quality data on learning. Further, using this information for program accountability rather than using it to inform and improve teacher practices and curriculum goes against what I feel is the true purpose of a quality child assessment. Using this type of test to hold programs accountable could create a host of harsh incentives—such as the temptation to only enroll children who face few barriers to learning or to recruit children who will test well—potentially ignoring children (i.e. those with language barriers or learning disabilities) who most need Head Start's services.

Challenges to Accountability.
We in the early childhood community should not be rushed into changing how we assess four-year-olds without a long and careful deliberation by a broad group of early childhood experts in order to avoid dangerous pitfalls that will have ramifications for all young children in America. I fear that this proposal could create a high-stakes testing environment that will change the nature of early childhood education to one that is too narrowly focused on a few aspects of children's learning and development. I assure you that many of the best minds in the country agree that this is an inappropriate practice and an unwise use of information in a program that works with the nation's most vulnerable three- and four-year-olds. The correct action should be a deliberative and public process that brings early childhood experts together to assist in developing an assessment that addresses these concerns.

In closing, let me reiterate that from my experiences and knowledge of Head Start and how it affects children and families—this program is a national treasure and an unqualified success. Head Start is working effectively now. While we as directors, staff, parents and legislators should never stop striving to improve the program, we should permit Head Start to continue to move forward on its current course to ensure that all eligible children receive these invaluable services and comprehensive support.

Currently, I have up to 100 children at one center waiting to receive these critical services. Everyday, we have to turn children and parents away because we have no room for more.

Early Head Start should also expand so we can reach young children as early as possible. Head Start programs can also use additional flexibility to meet their community's needs—whether it is to address the huge demands for infant and toddler care or to help children in families with incomes slightly above the poverty line.

Finally, we should continue to move forward in strengthening the credentials for Head Start teachers so that we can develop a workforce that is trained to provide services to our most vulnerable citizens and which is appropriately compensated for the incredible work they do.

As state budgets are cut and services are scaled back, we need Head Start now, more than ever before, as a stabilizing early childhood force in poor communities. Programs with which we collaborate are also in crisis. We need more federal support for Head Start and other early childhood programs, not less.

Every day we at KCMC work with community partners to change for the better the lives of children and families. It has been my life's work to ensure that all children get the support they need to achieve and succeed in school and later in life.

Testimony of Dwayne Crompton

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There are clearly ways to make Head Start better and I look forward to working with the Committee to discuss changes that will ensure that this 40-year-old program may continue to grow and improve. I do not believe that sending the program to the states, eliminating its program performance standards and allowing comprehensive services to be diluted are the changes we should be considering. I urge you to take a wiser and more compassionate course. In this reauthorization, we should seize the opportunity to once again affirm the success of this national treasure, to rally the nation to continue to advance Head Start's mission, and to expand the program's benefits to every poor child and family across this nation.

Thank you.

Testimony of Dwayne Crompton

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